



黒の魔王

菱影代理

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FREEDOM
NIGHT

「黒の魔王」シリーズ

黒の魔王

アルザス防衛戦

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FREEDOM
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「黒の魔王」シリーズ

黒の魔王

III

スパーダへ続く道

Wings of Dawn
菱影代理

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FREEDOM
NOVEL

Heritage Drive
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黒の魔王 IV

赤き憤怒の咆哮

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NOVEL

Note: Covers don't fit with coresponding volumes so thats why i decided to make this one big pdf and slap all the covers in the begining.

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Kuro No Maou

- Volume 1 -

The White Laboratory

Prologue

It was a pure white room. Walls in each direction were painted white without any seams, the altar enshrined in the centre was also pure white like hardened snow, and the lighting of the room was, again, also white.

“Give the offering.”

A voice resounds in the room from an unknown place. Double doors were opened and from beyond the dark passage, a queue of people came in. Similar to the white room, those people were also completely white.

Their whole body was covered by a spotlessly clean white robe; a white mask covered their faces, and not a single part of skin could be seen.

They held white boxes in their hands; a total of six boxes were brought into the room. Unknown whether these boxes were the ‘offering’, they nimbly set the boxes in the prescribed positions, and left the room.

A sound of locking could be heard with the closing of the double doors which resounded in the empty white room.

“The preparations are complete.”

The man ‘looking’ at the series of events from a separate room muttered in satisfaction.

He also, similar to the people who had set the boxes, was wearing a white robe, but his face was not covered with a mask and revealed a wrinkled face giving a sense of his age.

“Begin.”

With the declaration of the old man, the man waiting in the back of the room conveyed the thoughts of acknowledgement.

“ ٱلْمُذْتَلِفَةُ ٱلْعَالَمُ رَبُّ طِبَابِ ٱلرُّوحِ إِسْدُ تَدْعَاءُ تَقْدِيمِ ٱلْأَسْوَدِ ٱلْتَذِينِ ” - ending chant, opening the gate—“

With the voice of the person in the back, the old man closed his eyes, and attentively listened.

Knowing that currently, directly viewing the room with the white altar which was producing a light, had the danger of causing permanent loss of eyesight, the only thing reflected in his vision was darkness, i.e. the back of his own eyelids.

Soon the noisy room also turned silent.

“It was a success.”

When the old man muttered so, voice of joy and relief rose everywhere.

“Start with the measures.”

Again, the people in white started moving in a row in the passage connected with the white altar room.

Out of nowhere, the voice of the old man resounded directly in their ears with information which they put in their mind without missing a single word.

“Male, Age 17, Student—“

The personal data of the mysterious person came in from the old man. But, whether they understood the meaning or not, there was no sign of any bewilderment in them.

“Name is—fu,ku,hahaha.....”

The moment he was about to say the name of the person whose info was being given, suddenly laughter resounded instead.

“fuhahahaha!”

The old man was laughing, whether this was an unexpected situation, the men in white did not stop moving but there was certainly a slight unrest in them. Still, the men finally came to the white altar room and with an accustomed manner started unlocking the door.

“Apologies gentlemen, but it was simply too absurd of a name you see.”

As the old man said so, the inside of the room came into view. Similar to as it was previously, spotlessly white room. But the boxes they had carried had now disappeared, and as if in exchange for it, a single man was lying naked on the white altar.

A black haired man, his appearance matched with information given by the old man. And then, the old man once more said the name of the man.

“His name is, Kurono Maou.”

——-x——-x——-x——-

As a soft light fell upon my eyelids, a faint consciousness returned inside my head.

Remembering that I was in a deep sleep, I realised that I was wrapped up in a warm futon. As I thought of getting up, the devilish warmth of the bed made my determination to get out of it waver.

A..A little while longer.....5 more minutes.....

“Get up!”

With an angry voice, my body was mercilessly exposed to the cruel coldness. Due to the overly abrupt stimulus, I jumped up to my feet.

“uooo! Is it an enemy attack!?”

“What the hell are you fighting?”

With a cold voice, what came into my vision was the face I am most used to seeing. As soon as I recognized it, the drowsiness inside my head instantly disappeared.

Farewell dream world, Good Morning Reality.

In a slightly messed up room, snatching the futon away from me stood a single woman.

Glossy long black hair, unblemished white skin, well featured outline and a tall nose, straight vibrant lips and stiff and angled eyebrows gave off a feeling of anger.

Whether this sharp and severe expression should feel terrifying or beautiful would depend on personal choice, but the fact that it was a more than well ordered look would definitely be affirmed. In addition to the good looks, her height was also almost 180 cm.

Long, slender legs and a constricted waist line, on top of which the apron worn was further boosting her chest giving off an overwhelming presence. This level of style surpassing that of Models or Gravure Idols, unless you are a severe lolicon, homo, or incompetent, was definitely eye catching. But no matter how pretty looking she was, it could never touch the heartstrings of my true eros, because,

“Good Morning, Mom.”

She was my true blood-related mother.

“Good Morning, hurry and get up, everyone is already on the table.”

Saying that, mom left the room, leaving the door ajar.

“At least close the door.....it’s cold.”

Looking at the clock on the table, it was 6:50. As a high school student who had no morning practice, it could be said that this was still early to get out of bed.

Anyway, can’t really go to sleep again now that I am up once.

“Guess I should get ready then?”

And thus today once again my, Kurono Maou’s, unchanging peaceful life began.

Changing into the Gakuran(uniform) that is the proof of a high school student, I left my room situated on the second floor.

After I was done with washing my face, brushing teeth, and readying my appearance in the washroom on the first floor, I went to the living room for breakfast.

Just like mom said, two small figures could be seen on the table.

“Good Morning.”

As I called out, the two turned around after realizing my presence.

One is my father. Even now retaining youthful appearance of a 30yr old, he surpassed mom who could be categorized as beautiful and surprised friends and acquaintances.

Youthfulness that could even be called as that of a 20yr old together with his short height of 160cm, he looked more like a young boy rather than a middle aged man.

What is up with the body of this Father? Makes you think whether his body not know ageing or maybe his time has stopped.

Probably by the time I graduate from high school I would look older when compared to him.

By the way rather than taking to this androgynous short father, I am more similar to my mother. Inheriting her tall height and sharp eyes, at 183cm and with a villainous look, I have demon-like form.

It's good that I'm tall, but the fact that I don't have a bishounen-like face of my father is a bit regretful.

Thanks to this villainous face, my surroundings are scared of me even though I have not done anything.

“Good Morning, Maou.”

The other person sitting on the table is my elder sister, Mana.

Completely opposite to me, my sister resembles my father, i.e. cute, small, sweet, ephemeral, giving a feeling of wanting to protect-type Bishoujo. Even though she is already in college, she has a suiting black twintailed hairstyle.

“Did you make a Bento again today?”

“n.....un.”

That appearance of replying with lightly blushing cheeks is definitely worth seeing, even if she is your sister. But the one who is the receiver of this good will hidden in her small chest is not me, but her recently gotten boyfriend.

The only thing able to bring about such an easy to understand face on my usually indifferent and poker faced sister is something related to her boyfriend only. Well that’s how happy she must be. But then anything regarding lovers is unrelated to me. Alright, one day even I’ll get a girlfriend, probably, most likely, I think...It’ll be good if I can. A touch of anxiety crosses my heart as I finish the rice and Miso soup and get up from my seat.

“Going already?”

On being asked by my sister, I replied as I put on my coat.

“It’s raining, so I’ll take the bus today.”

“Oh, the bus stop is far away after all.”

Going to the same school till last year, my sister also knew that it took some time to get to the bus stop from home. If going by bicycle, it would be fine even if I left a little late, but I have no choice but to give up when it's raining this vigorously.

"Here Bento, don't forget it."

"nn, thanks."

Taking the Bento from mom, I put it in the bag in a way so that it does not overturn and went towards the entrance.

"I'm off."

Sent off by the 3 people of my family, I stepped outside in the still chilly weather.

I'll get down on the bus stop in front of the school, but first I have to cross a traffic light to reach the school building. As large raindrops fell on the umbrella, I waited for the signal to turn green with the many other students similar to me who were commuting to school by the bus.

Many others who came on foot also stopped at the red light, as it became more and more crowded. In that crowd, I noticed a single schoolgirl. Maybe due to her small and delicate figure, her dark blue umbrella looked unnaturally big in her hands.

Although the crowd was big enough to drown the small her in it, her characteristic flaxen long hair noticeably stood out, giving her a definite presence.

By her side was probably her classmate. As I fretted over whether it would be okay to interrupt their happy talk just to greet her,

“Ah”

“Nn”

Our eyes met unexpectedly.

Her long eyelashes and lovely round eyes were devilish enough to intentionally arouse the desire to protect inside of men.

Sharp outline and pure white skin, a straight nose and small yet juicy lips; It was impossible to find any flaw in the beauty of her face. Silky flaxen long hair, narrow feminine bodyline dressed in sailor uniform gave a neat and tidy feeling.

The ideal bishoujo that everyone imagines, she was without a doubt a perfect personification of it.

Now that our eyes met I couldn't feign ignorance anymore, not because she was a perfect beauty, but because she was simply an acquaintance.

“Good Morning, Shirasaki-san.”

I hardened my resolved and decided to greet , Shirasaki Yuriko, my colleague in the same Literature club.

“ah,oh, Good Morning Kurono-kun....”

The literature club had few members, so obviously I was acquainted with her and had also talked with her quite a few times, but in terms of relationship she was less of a friend and more of an acquaintance.

Thus I had nothing more to talk to her in this place, I have showed plenty formality so now you can go back to talking to your friends who are looking at me with a weird a gaze, but,

“.....”

Is there something? Shirasaki-san is standing in front of me without moving. But without saying anything, a silent air of tension flows between us. As a result, with a difference in height of more than 30cm, naturally it felt like I was looking down(in a domineering sense) on Shirasaki-san. Maybe to others it might look as if questioning Shirasaki-san.

“a,ano, Today—”

“Let’s go, Yuriko!”

Shirasaki-san looked like she was trying to say something but her friend pulled her hand and crossed the signal, which had turned green at sometime, and disappeared in the crowd of the passing students.

“...What? Is there something at the club today?”

Shirasaki-san would not talk to me for something private, so it must be something club-related. Maybe the club will be closed today or something?

“Well, I’ll know when I go.”

But, her friend sure was looking at me with a gaze heavily filled with animosity; I think my glass heart cracked a little. Well, before that Shirasaki-san herself doesn’t really meet eyes with me, and I had already suspected it when all she could do was awkward greetings but,

“Seriously, maybe I really am hated.....”

Classes were boring, but I think they are not completely boring. I can keep up with what is being taught, and it's not like nothing is entering my head, maybe I could find some sort of joy in learning. But when you are tired, the teacher's voice automatically becomes hypnotism sound waves.

"Hey Kurono, lend me your notes."

But, this time it wasn't me but my friend who was in charge of nodding off.

"Sure but, sleeping for consecutively 4 periods is also problematic."

With an amazed tone I handed over the notebook containing the Kanji written on the board, copied accurately and exactly.

"Thanks! But yesterday I ended up doing an all-nighter, so it can't be helped or rather it was inevitable."

Laughing without any shame, this guy is one of my very few friends, Saika Yota. With the end of 4th period it was now lunchbreak so I joined my desk with Saika's.

"So, did you finish it last night?"

"Nah, there is one particular route that is quite difficult. I thought it would be fine as long as I raise affection points with her, but it seems I also have to raise some affection points with another heroine and make this one jealous once—"

Hearing a part of Saika's conversation, what the hell he is saying can only be understood by those who know what he is talking about. Basically, a 18+ romance simulation game's completion guide.

"— un, well this and that took up my time, then taking a break I watched the late-night anime in real time using up another hour."

Saika has a medium build and doesn't even wear glasses so he doesn't look like an otaku in any way, but the insides are as you can see.

Otaku level can't be said to be severe but definitely cannot be called light either. Similarly, though not of Saika level but I myself will also come in the otaku category. The genre I actively write in the Literature club is also neither pure literature nor mystery but the so called light novel.

"Couldn't you just record the late-night anime?"

"Nah, it's no good unless you see it in real time! It's more exciting!"

Is that so? I replied vaguely as I brought out my Bento.

"Oh, by the way, I forgot to ask you in the morning but you came to school today with Shirasaki-san didn't you?"

"No, it wasn't something like—"

"It's fine Kurono, you don't really have to play the dense character here."

What do you mean by play? I'm not some small-minded guy who works hard to maintain some kind of character everyday!

"I saw the scene of you two looking into each others' eyes in front of the signal. Man, I'm jealous! If this was an eroge it was at a level where you'll get an event CG! I want to experience event scenes in real life too!"

"Calm down, we go to same club and that's it. It's not a relation where an eroge scenario can become reality."

"Is that so?"

What's with that doubtful from the bottom of my heart gaze you are giving me? I'll start seeing black coils behind you in reality due to your over reaction!

"All protagonists are like that! 'I'm a normal student, not popular, I have no relation to that girl'— No matter how you look at it, heroine affection points are at 100% dammit?"

"Like I said, calm down! Don't mix reality with fantasy. I'll say this just in case but, something like I was childhood friends with Shirasaki-san or made an important promise or we are not dating yet she comes to wake me up at home every day or eating lunch together on the rooftop even though our classes are different, such events are absolutely non-existent."

"Be quiet! Getting a 2-shot scene while going to school with a bishoujo of Shirasaki-san level is more than a splendid situation already! Even then you think it's nothing? Are you really a guy? A normal guy doesn't even have a single contact with any girl!"

"Th..Thats...."

Now that I think, he might be right. Even if nervous or hated, just being able to greet a unanimously accepted bishoujo in the morning might be a blessing already. If I had not joined the literature club, the amount of contact with females I had would also be zero. I can barely remember the names of the girls in my class, and I don't remember properly greeting any of them even once.

"Wait a sec, it's not like you don't at all with girls at all. You're in the soccer club after all, don't you talk with that cute manager?"

“Idiot! She is already in a relationship with the captain! And this is her 3rd boyfriend after entering high school! Nooo I don’t want to hear real life romances of girls!!”

“Selfish aren’t you? Isn’t it fine as long as she is cute?”

“Like hell! Women who NTR and get NTRed are not heroines at all! Something brutish as that should only exist in eroges and soap operas!”

“I get it, I get it so first of all calm down and sit down, alright?”

With a ‘can’t help it’ expression Saika sat down with a flump. If he continued to heat up like that, he would have become the centre of attraction of the classmates in a bad way.

“nn, wait if girls with boyfriends are NG then Shirasaki-san is no exception right?”

“Huh, is that so?”

I rested my chin on my hands and looked outside the window with a faraway look as I talked to Saika.

“Well, Shirasaki-san is the good girl type that talks to even people like me without making an unpleasant face after all.”

Well she doesn’t directly match eyes either but its better than being bluntly avoided.

“Well you do have a scary face, and a giant on top of it.”

“That’s right, but I’m kind of sensitive about it so don’t say anything more.”

“OK, so?”

“Well, there is no way that there is not a single boy in her surroundings right?”

It’s only obvious; a convenient development like she is kind only to me is not going to happen, wait, if she really is a completely good girl then she wouldn’t be kind only to one specific person anyway.

“Certainly, I have seen a lot of good-looking guys talking to Shirasaki-san.”

“That’s right, I’m just someone who is among the many people who can just greet her, and the no. of people she gets along with can’t be counted with just two hands.”

“aah, I guess reality is like this after all! Bishoujos are human too after all, if there is a good guy near her, it’s only obvious what will happen.”

“That’s how it is, if it’s Shirasaki-san then naturally she must have one or two boy—“

“I don’t.”

The one who interrupted me was not Saika, how should I say if he suddenly started talking in such a cute voice I won’t be able to stay friends with him. That’s not it, this voice, could it be?!

“I don’t have a boyfriend.”

“Shi..Shirasaki-san.....”

Why? With such timing would you appear here? Didn’t I just say that we aren’t in a relation where we ate lunch together? This is the first time that she came to my class to me specifically.

Rather, why am I feeling guilty right now? My heart is thumping like crazy, ah, I can actually feel cold sweat flowing on my face.

Wait, calm down, it's not like I said anything to diss her!

"No, well....sorry, I said something on my own."

I ended up apologizing. Well, talking about other people relationships is not exactly good, and the fact that it was heard by the person herself, there is nothing you can do but apologize.

"ah, I'm not really angry or anything, sorry."

"ah, um, is that so? It's fine then....."

No no this atmosphere isn't fine! Saika has already become a stone statue and has taken a 'doesn't concern me' posture.

It seems that she isn't really angry, but I can feel that she isn't really pleasant either. But since the person herself said so, I can only drop the topic here.

"umm, well, did you need something?"

"Yes, that, I failed to say it in the morning."

For the time being let's forget about that and focus on the contents of this conversation. So she really had some message to tell me in the morning.

"Today, there is an important meeting in the club so you must come."

"Meeting? Is that so..got it I'll make sure."

I didn't hear anything about this yesterday.....well there must be something urgent considering that she went through all the trouble to come to me. At the end of the day, there is no change in plans to go to the club.

"un, well then....I'll be waiting."

"Yeah, thanks."

Like this after finishing our business-like talk, Shirasaki-san left the classroom with a quick pace.

"Man, bishoujos sure have an unusually high impact, don't they?

This cold-hearted friend of mine who was quite until now came back to life.

"Saika, couldn't you have helped me by following up or something?"

"No way, impossible! In the first place I'm not an acquaintance either, but good thing you found a solution right?"

Could you call that calming down? I only saw my affection points going down quickly.

"So it seems Shirasaki-san doesn't have a boyfriend. Good for you Kurono! You still have a chance!"

"ahh, again the same topic."

"High school life means romance events right?"

"Weren't you against it in real life?"

“Alright! Now even I’m motivated! Oi Kurono, next time introduce me to Shirasaki-san!

“Do you want to cheer for me or do you want to go out yourself, which is it?!”

All I can say is that, at an acquaintance my communication skills aren’t high enough to introduce my friend. Basically, with my status it is impossible to introduce Saika to Shirasaki-san.

“Rather than that, let’s eat.”

“Yeah, or lunchbreak is too short, can’t they increase it to atleast 2 hours—“

I reach towards my bento left alone during my high tension conversation with Shirasaki-san. On removing the lid, waiting for me should be mom’s special no-effort taking simple cooking but,

“What the hell....”

White rice on top of which a big heart made with pink flakes came into my view.

“Eh, what, Kurono what is that bento!? Such love filled bento I have only seen in games!?”

“Ah, that’s it—“

This love filled bento is definitely not something mom would have made for me.

“Mom mistakenly switched my bento.....”

This is without a doubt what Sis made for her boyfriend. About now Sis' boyfriend must be eating mom's cold bento.

"Uooh amazing! It's a heart,ahaha! Incredible!!"

I ignored my hyper friend and with mixed feelings decided to eat Sis' handmade bento. But dear sister, this is a bit, isn't your love a bit too heavy?

It was now after school after attending two more periods. After completing my sweeping duty I directly went to the literature club's classroom. Opening the door I stepped into the familiar classroom.

"Huh?"

Unintentionally, I let out a stupid voice because there was only one person in the whole classroom. Certainly the club has very few members and many are also ghost members but the fact that there was no one else except one despite getting prior info, and I was even late due to sweeping duty, is a bit strange.

I was imagining the usual president idly chatting with others while waiting but it was not so. Also the fact that the only member to have already come would be Shirasaki-san was also unexpected.

"ah, Kurono-kun."

"Shirasaki-san you're alone?"

"n,yes..."

Ok conversation over!

I had no other words to speak towards that cute unchanging face of hers. Troubled whether I should talk more or not I randomly took a seat. I was thinking of too many things, but none could leave my mouth. Similarly nothing came from her side either.

Shirasaki-san held a paperback with cute cover, imitating it, I also took out my self-written light novel from my bag to kill time.

On the A4 size papers stuck together was the title [Legend of Hero Abel], a title so straight no RPG would ever use it. This is something I wrote for the first time in middle-school. The contents were as per title- the hero Abel goes to defeat the Demon King. No twists or originality, and the sloppy writing on top of it screamed amateur work. Still it was something with a proper conclusion, a completed work. Maybe I should reread it, or maybe write a sequel.....

Absolute silence. Except for the sound of athletic clubs' yells coming from the ground and the sound of our turning of pages, the clubroom was mostly silent. Due to the awkward atmosphere, not a single sentence of the light novel was entering my mind. What, why isn't anybody coming? Wasn't there supposed to be a meeting? Anyone's fine but please come already! Due to the incident during lunchbreak, the atmosphere felt really awkward between the two of us alone and I won't be able to keep this up. Ah, in the first place I have never been alone with Shirasaki-san before this. It was always during a conversation with somebody else that I talked to her.

No but, continuing this silence is kind of painful. Though a bit reckless maybe I should try and talk about something random? That's right, we are fellow members and even if our genres are a bit different there must be something common to talk about.

Also sooner or later president and others would noisily come into the club anyway, so as long as I could talk for that little time it was fine. Alright I'm gonna do this—

“Um”

Ugh our voices overlapped!

“ah, sorry”

“n.....”

Awkward, even though we both were silent till now, to think we would raise our voices together..

“You can go first—“

“ah, it's fine, Kurono-kun can talk first.”

Is what she said but it's not like I have anything important to talk about.

“No, well, I was thinking that everyone sure is slow.”

Incredibly harmless and boring topic, even I can't help but think that I'm boring.

“ah, yes, that's right, me too....”

But, Shirasaki-san also was about to say something similar—

“.....no, that's not, that's not it.”

“Huh?”

“Actually, that was not what I wanted to say.”

For some reason I could see some change in her from her previous quiet attitude.

Is there something else she wanted to say to me?

“Well, you see—”

As if resolved something Shirasaki-san vigorously stood up. As she stood up, the Shirasaki-san who never even met my eyes was now clearly looking at me straight in the eye. In those lovely eyes now dwelt resolve and a colour that expressed strength.

To this sudden change I was somewhat surprised but on the outside I kept calm.

“It, It was a lie... “

“Huh, what is?”

“That there was a meeting, that, it was a lie.”

What she was saying, I could not understand even a single bit of it. My head was full of question marks.

“ah, is that so?”

It's not like it was something to get angry at, in the first place I had no idea what was the motive, so I had no choice but to continue the conversation.

“Yes, and um, you see.....”

“.....”

The silence continued longer than I thought, the conversation also stopped. But, I felt that right now I shouldn't call her out and just silently wait for her.

“That, I, I.....”

And finally she spoke.

“Kurons-kun, I ——!!”

Right, Shirasaki-san had definitely said it.

“.....?”

But, I couldn't hear, neither Shirasaki-san's voice nor the sounds coming from outside, I couldn't hear anything. Why? Why can't I hear? Did my eardrum get torn suddenly or something?

“——!?”

A soundless world, suddenly an intense pain attacked my head.

I have had a lot of headaches when I have had a cold and all, but never this intense, no, in the first place the nature of headache itself is completely different. This, this isn't a normal headache, this is something more life threatening, something lethal——

“!?”

My vision was upturned; a shocking pain ran through my body.

After a few seconds, I realized I had fallen off my chair. Rather than reducing, the pain kept on increasing with every second due to which I lay on the floor unable to get up.

The only thing I could do was struggle inside my own mind.

I may have been raising a painful voice but I myself was unable to hear it.

“———-!”

With pitiful tears in the eyes, the view of never before seen Shirasaki-san frantically trying to cling to my body came.

Rather than thinking about the pain, or asking for an ambulance, the fact that I was causing her make such a grief filled expression made me bothered.

The view filled with her tear-stained face was suddenly littered by something like black sand.

This is bad, it seems even my vision is becoming strange.

The black thing soon enveloped my view like a sandstorm, and her crying face disappeared from my view. Can't hear anything. Can't see anything. Before I realized, even the feeling of lying on the floor had disappeared. I couldn't even make sure whether I was breathing or not. The only thing certain is the pain overrunning my head.

Am I going to die—

In the absolute darkness where all my 5 senses had been shut, I soon lost my self-awareness as well.

I don't want to die—

That was the last thought.



Chapter 1 – Awakening

Suddenly, as I awakened, the inside of the room was dark.

What, is it still night outside?

It's not like I had a nightmare or something. Well anyway, if it's still night then I should go to sleep again, there is school tomorrow after all. As I thought that, I felt a discomfort in my body.

Somehow, my body is awfully painful.

No, the bed I'm sleeping on is too hard due to which I am feeling pain everywhere.

There's no way I would sleep here. What's wrong with me? Did I sleep in a weird posture and fell off my bed or something? Something like that has not happened to me since the time I was born.....

Anyway, as I thought of going back to my bed, my body—-didn't move.

I realized that I was so completely paralyzed that not even a finger could be moved. Is this the so called sleep paralysis? This is my first experience, but I would have been glad if this happened while I was at least lying on my bed because even though I can't move my body, the sensation of the hard floor is perfectly transmitted. As I was at a loss as to what should I do now, my eyes finally adjusted to the darkness and the surroundings became clearer.

.....Where the hell is this?

There, I finally noticed, that I was not sleeping in my room. Still in a paralyzed state, my neck didn't move but my eyes could so I surveyed my surroundings.

It was a completely empty room. I'm probably lying in the middle of the room and other than me nothing existed inside this room of around 6 tatami mats.

In my view, not a single door existed either. A fearful thought flew into my mind, that maybe I'm trapped in a room with not a single opening.

What is this? Seriously, where the hell is this? Why am I in this kind of situation?

A bad dream; is what I wanted to think but my consciousness is way too clear and even though I can't move, the sensation of my body clearly exists. I am unable to doubt that this is not real.

That, that's right I think I am starting to remember some things—I wasn't sleeping in my room, I was at school. Right, I was at the clubroom after school. I am a member of the literature club which doesn't fit someone like me who has a big body and sharp eyes. Inside the scarcely crowded club room I was excitedly thinking of writing my favourite type of chuuni filled light novel, no that's not right, at that time I was alone with Shirasaki-san in an awkward atmosphere.

During that, out of nowhere I had a headache.....and fainted, I think.

Somehow, the memories of the time when I got the headache and fell off my seat faintly came back to me. With an overreaction like that, I caused Shirasaki-san unneeded worry. Also, has my family been properly informed about this?

Leaving that aside, I fainted in the clubroom so is this a hospital? No, a hospital would never lay a patient on such a hard pedestal; even field hospitals don't treat you that way. Maybe they thought I died and was sent to the morgue? Even corpses are laid down on proper mats, or rather, my

thoughts are leaping too far. There is no way something like that would happen.

No, but that 'not possible' situation is exactly what I am in right now. Just what kind of story is behind the reason that I was laid down in such a place? Could it be that I was kidnapped? Obviously, I have a normal family you can find anywhere. My father is a civil servant and mother is a housewife. Something like I am the son of a rich noble family, or prince of some country or some other extraordinary birth circumstances doesn't exist. The only thing extraordinary is probably the appearances of my parents.

But, something like a mix-up—my further incoherent thoughts were suddenly interrupted.

Uooh, too bright!!

Suddenly, the room was filled with light.

Due the instant change from dark to light, my eyes temporarily stopped working. But, after a few seconds I got used to the light, but the changes in the room were not just limited to that.

I sensed the presence of other humans.

Not something vague, but clear sounds of boots resounding on the hard floor. The fact that someone came cleared the fact that I was not locked in an airtight room. But that relief was also instantly blown away.

The person who came into my view, his appearance was too extraordinary.

Clad in something like a white mantle and his head was also covered with a hood. It would have been fine if it was just that.

He's wearing a white mask. Just looking at it, my wariness level instantly jumped to MAX. Not a gasmask, but the type worn in operas, simple yet the whole surface was covered with abnormal designs.

What the hell? These guys are definitely dangerous!

The people in my view were 3, all of them were wearing similar outfits.

Are these guys running some kind of weird religion or something? However, I still lay paralyzed and I could do nothing but look around restlessly unable to move even a finger, and unable to make even some moaning sounds.

I could feel cold sweat running down my cheek. I don't really understand but I'm definitely in a very desperate situation right now.

「اسد تہ یہ فقط اُن مہلا،」

Suddenly, one the masked men said something.

「العمل مواصلة حال أي على أذا، ت قلق لا」

To that, another one answered.

Even though I was already in despair, I was further pushed into even more despair. That's because I don't understand a single word of what these masked men are talking about.

At the very least, it is not English or Chinese or any other foreign language that I might be familiar with.

Although, I, who barely got average marks in English might not have been able to understand it too. At least it's not English, that's for sure. Completely

ignoring me who was totally in panic and chaos, the masked men continued their conversation.

That conversation suddenly, or so I thought, when one the masked men brought out a white ring. It looked like a fluorescent lamp in the shape of ring, but that's not it. But then again, what was that special ring without any ornaments was not something I knew. A tool I have never seen before. As I wondered what they would do with it, suddenly from inside the ring, thin needles came out.

Total of 7 needles came out. With a *kashun* sound I certainly saw them coming out. I thought they were pretty but at the same time I also had a bad premonition.

Similar to how it came out, they went back in an instant and the ring returned to normal. And then the masked man who held the ring brought it towards my head—

O, Oi, Oi, wait, wait a second, don't bring something dangerous like that, where needles fly out, towards my head!!!

Unable to neither move my body, nor produce any voice, other than restlessly moving my eyes and sweating from the whole body, I could not give out any other reaction.

The masked man, without any hesitation, with practiced hands, stuck the ring to my head.

Stop it, seriously stop it!

If the needles came out now, what is going to happen to my head?

With that length, they definitely reach my brain, and there are 7 of them!

I'll die, I'll surely die.

The fear of death instantly overcame me, but, I had no way to put up any resistance. Even crying and shouting while shivering in an unsightly manner was not allowed to me.

In what was barely a few seconds, the ring was set on my head.

Stop, please stop—

Unable to speak out, mercilessly, from my head, came a *kashun* sound.

And at the end, I lost my consciousness.

Chapter 2 – Submission

“.....I’m alive.”

I muttered within my faint consciousness. As I awoke, I was again lying on the hard floor. Soon, my memories before I lost consciousness came back to me.

“guh.....”

I feel like vomiting but somehow resist.

With the paralysis now not in effect, I became able to make groaning sounds like this, and somehow, also able to move my body.

On putting my hand on my head, a hard sensation came to my fingers. Without a doubt, that evil, needle spewing ring is currently completely attached to my head.

“Shit.....this is the worst....”

Although it wasn’t painful, receiving something like that torture-like treatment out of nowhere, anyone would curse once or twice. But, with this my freedom of body has returned. First, I should confirm the situation I’m in.

I’m currently in same type of empty room where I was first kept. There is no pedestal in the centre anymore. Seriously, it’s nothing but walls. Even the ceiling is also white.

In the front, there is a similar white door but, I doubt it would be unlocked. Seriously, without any windows I’m starting to feel depressed. Huh? Wait, if there are no windows does that mean I’m in the basement?

Well if it's meant to act as a jail, it's a valid arrangement alright.

My attire has also become similar to those masked men i.e white clothes.

Though there is no mantle or mask, it is quite a simple one piece robe-like cloth. By the way, I am also wearing underwear.

Is this a prison uniform? No, it's not certain that I am in a prison yet. But still, no matter how I look at it I don't think I'm in Japan anymore.

Those guys were speaking in a weird foreign language; even these clothes are weird. Nowadays even people in developing countries wear western styled clothes. These bare handmade clothes are definitely unusual.

No, wait a second, if those guys are a super dangerous evil religious creed, then that mysterious language, which could make even a chuunibyou patient run, might be their original language. These clothes might also be some kind of handmade cosplay clothes with deep meaning behind it.

If I think like that, then it's not necessary that I'm in some faraway foreign country. I could be in some kind of religious facility hidden deep inside the mountains of Japan.

But, why did I have to get dragged into something like this.....

For the time being, the fact that I am alive and in one piece means that I'm not going to be immediately killed. Wait, even if I don't die, am I going to be subjected to tortures like that ring from now on? That would be the worst. If it's going to be like that, I might as well bite my tongue and face a peaceful death instead. I refuse to die in a situation where I am killed while begging for my life.

Anyway, whether this some foreign country or Japan, I must think of a way to escape this place. It's best to take as much distance as possible from dangerous people like these who can calmly put things like this torture tool on someone's head. Or so I say, but for now all I can do is check whether the door in front of me is locked or not.

As I stood up and took a step towards the door, with a *gachari* sound, the door started opening.

“ ”

Automatic door? That's not possible. Then that means someone from the other side has opened it.

And the one who had opened the door was, as expected, the same masked men.

«قوي الأ سود ال تدين هيئة من ت توقع ك نت بال فعل، مسد ت ي قظاك نت أوه،»

As usual I can't understand anything of what the masked man is saying in his original lingo. On hearing it again, it does give somewhat of an English-like feel but.....No, before that I should pay attention their movement.

I put myself on guard, but the masked seemed to worry more about whatever was behind him than me. It seems there are other masked men behind him too. 2 masked men entered the room and I moved towards the wall trying to take some distance from them.

And then another one came in, or so thought, but I became unable to look away from his face. That is because he was not wearing a mask and showing his bare face.

Realizing that he wasn't Japanese in a single glance, he was a white-skinned old man with a finely chiselled face. His hair was hidden inside his hood but most probably it was completely white and his eyes were blue. His age was easily above 60. And he also had a proud white beard to top it off.

Could it be that this old man was the leader of those masked men? Wait, they aren't going to start calling him a living god or something, right?

As I was sending a doubtful gaze, the geezer(he made me face such hardships, so I'll call him geezer) looked at me with suspicious eyes.

At that moment, I was attacked by an intense headache.

"gyaaaaaahhhh!!!"

To have your head break must be something like this, no, I really thought it might break.

Pain strong enough to think you are about to die, but what was actually giving me pain was the 'will' of somebody else that kept on resounding inside of my head.

It hurts——hurts——-pain——-death——

Inside of my head, a different thought started rampaging on its own.

The cause of the pain was, without a doubt, this thought, and I understood that the source was this geezer in front of me intuitively.

As I fell on the hard floor I looked towards the geezer with teary eyes. With not anger, but purely as if begging in an unsightly manner.

——-non-resistance——-submission

Before fainting, the ache stopped, and at that moment I realized that I could not against this geezer, no all the masked men. Or rather I was forced to be like that.

—Stand

The effect of the headache still remaining, I was unable to stand immediately when the thought came into my head.

—Stand

Again, the headache slowly started coming back. I forced myself and unsteadily stood up. It was a feeling worse than vomiting, but it was better than being attacked by that headache again.

With a rough breath, I stood up and faced the geezer.

「غرامة ت شغل ال ق يود」

The geezer, similar to the masked men, said words I was unable to understand.

“.....”

I just stood there unable to give any sort of reaction.

The geezer could send me thoughts, but it was a vague image that could not be put in words.

I was unable to understand the purpose.

But then, I don't think I would be able to have a smooth communication with them even if words could be said.

—Walk

As the thought was relayed, the geezer turned back and started walking.

Unable to resist, with staggering steps, all I could do was follow the back on which an emblem of a cross was painted.

As I crossed the door, I saw the tunnel continuing in darkness. As if ominously predicting that compared to the hell that lay in my future, it might be much better to just commit suicide right now.



Chapter 3 – Hell

Waking up at 7 a.m. in the morning, leaving home at 8 for school, attending classes seriously without sleeping or talking, go to clubroom after school, and then, at 7 p.m. go back home and sleep before the day changes.

Such a wholesome and healthy school life is what I, Kurono Maou, have been leading. Or rather, I had been leading. One day I was suddenly attacked by a headache in my clubroom and fainted. When I woke up, I was in a weird room.

There, a fearsome ring with protruding needles was attached to my head, and from then on I began an unimaginable everyday life in hell.

I don't know how much time has passed from the day I woke up in this facility. At least, I think it has not been a month but I can't tell the exact number of days.

Even then there are a few things that I came to know. First of all I, with that geezer as the chief, have been subjected to human experimentation by this group with the Christian-like cross symbol.

Through the white ring still attached to my brain physically, my actions are being completely controlled. With just a mere thought, that geezer or masked men can give me pain strong enough to make me wish for my own death.

On top of that, they can also completely paralyze my body making me unable to do anything. Externally manipulating my mind, they have complete control.

Thanks to this, they have kept me as a prisoner without using anything like handcuffs even once. Even during the painful experiments there is no need

to hold my body down. Resistance to pain itself can also be controlled by them after all. As for the experiments conducted on me, they are not something simple like testing side effects of a new medicine.

From the top of the head till the knees, my body is being completely restructured by them; something similar to an evil secret organisation is being done here. And above all else the biggest problem is that these restructuring experiments are not done through some kind of high technology but instead are based on [Magic].

The first experiment done on me included making my body compatible to hold magical force inside body.

Would it be better to call it pulled out? I don't know the details but, as a result, now inside me I can definitely perceive a different energy. With just that, it might sound nice to have awakened to a new power. But that experiment was the most painful out of all the ones done on me.

It was as if melted iron was being made to flow inside my veins moreover due to the ring my consciousness was kept forcefully awake and even fainting was not allowed.

Now that I think about it, it's amazing I didn't die from the pain. Even after the experiment, it took some time for the remaining hot sensation inside my body to lessen. Due to this experience, I was able to understand the craft known as [magic] brought about by magical power, without any problems. But, understanding and actually using it is a different thing. What kind of magic I can use is still unknown, since I have not tried it even once.

But since the control ring on my head is made of magic craft, then similarly, I am certain I should be able to prevent its effect with magic too.

Thus, I who had now clearly become able to use magic had to undergo many other experiments after that. What kind meaning or result each and every experiment held; I had no way of knowing.

Various liquids with gaudy colours were many a time injected into me. One time, my head was also drowned in a murky liquid which stank worse than the gutter. Even though I'm not an alien, they even embedded various metal pieces and gem like stones inside my body.

And then, with every experiment came pain inducing secondary effects in succession like headaches, stomach aches, nausea, high fever, and then starting with dizziness, loss of eyesight, full body paralysis, hallucinations, necrosis, breathing suspension and many other fatal symptoms, that made maintenance of life activity doubtful, started appearing regularly as well.

But, no matter how lethal a symptom may appear, at the end I was always able to regain my healthy body.

During the endless cycles of destruction and regeneration of my body, I started hallucinating; maybe, I have already died many times and brought back to life each time.

After all there is something like magic. It won't be surprising no matter what they do.

Just how has my body been modified under these experiments, I barely knew. The only visible results to me were that I became able to feel magical power and that the words spoken by the geezer and masked men started sounding like Japanese to me.

That and the fact that times like these where my self-consciousness was clear was slowly becoming shorter and shorter. Not because my sleeping

time was getting larger. This is the time where I am in a half-dreamy state and my body starts moving on my own.

My sleeping hours in a day was not even 2 hours. In the first place, I was too unsteady to know whether I woke up in the morning or at night.

After coming here, I have not seen anything other than white walls. Maybe in this world, the shining sun and sky, the lush green earth didn't exist.

I, only now, finally came to realize that this was not the world I was previously in but a [Different world] ruled by the concept known as Magic.

Just how many times have I fallen in despair?

I can only hazily remember the faces of my family, of my friends at school.

Still, inside this empty prison room of mine, as long as I kept on remembering those peaceful school days of the distant past, I'll keep on being resurrected by the needles in my mind.

Today, my condition is pretty good.

Neither head nor body hurts anywhere, the sensation of the tears flowing on my cheek can also be felt clearly.

Aah, I want to go back, I want go back home———

"No.49, come out."

Opening the door, the masked man called me.

No.49. That is my name here. What does that mean? I don't really have a reason to think on it.

“Hurry up.”

Stand——Come——Walk——

Before the headache becomes worse, quickly standing up, today once again
I continue walking beyond the dark tunnel.



Chapter 4 – Black Magic

The first thing beyond the passage was, obviously, the first place I came to.

It was a circular hall. Up till now all the places, whether it be the prison, passage or the lab, gave of a very cramped feeling, so the hall gave of off an overly spacious and open impression.

On looking around I realized that the masked man that led me here had already exited the room.

Well then, I wonder what kind of pain is waiting for me here. It would be nice if they hold a dance party in this spacious hall instead.

Good grief, it seems if I don't keep thinking up boring jokes I'll go insane.

Wait, will it be more peaceful if I went insane instead?

As I thought this, from a door other than the one I came through, while making a *gachagacha* sound, I realized that someone was coming.

The one who came was the usual white masked man. But his outfit was different from the ones up till now. What covered his whole body was not a mantle but a dully shining protector.

Armour might be a better word.

“With this we shall initiate No.49's manoeuvring experiments. No.49, use Black Magic to destroy the doll in front of you.”

For the first time I got an explanation of the experiment. Does that mean that the results depend that much on what I do? The experiment was, I could understand with even the short explanation, to basically for me to use

magic. To go through all the trouble to restructuring my whole body just to make me able to use magic, I had no idea what were their reasons, but at least, I knew that these guys weren't kind enough to give me enough free time to slowly learn magic by myself.

The armoured man who came in front of me, here should I call him a doll as per the explanation? Well anyhow, I don't know what kind logic is behind it but they seem to be moving like a human due to the effect of some weird magic.

And so, that weirdly moving doll seems to be moving towards with the same *gachagacha* noisy sound. Basically, I need to use my magic to destroy it quickly otherwise I'll be beaten to a pulp by those steel gauntlets covering its both hands!!

"Ohh shit!?"

The doll raised its fist overhead and began its strike.

Once when I was in elementary school I punched the classmate in anger who had destroyed my handicraft I had made painstakingly during the summer holidays. Other than that, I have absolutely no experience in fighting.

Obviously, I don't possess something like skill in martial arts or a hidden talent in fighting. I'm just an amateur with a big body. Still I was somehow able to dodge that punch thrown without any feints.

It should be obvious but the attack wasn't going to stop after dodging just one punch. The doll kept on releasing consecutive punches.

"Sh,Shit——"

Timidly I ran away towards the back but I would soon reach the wall. Use magic, is what they said, but even if I want to I just can't use it suddenly.

Certainly, I could sense the presence of magical power in my body but to use it I need more time to concentrate—

"Guh, Aagh!"

The iron fist of the doll connects with the top of my shoulder. Due to the hardness and shock of the fist, I thought my bones would break with just one attack, but after actually getting hit once, it wasn't that bad.

Of course, it still hurts. Could it be that the doll's power is less than I thought? Or like a morphing hero who had undergone secret modifications, I had become sturdy?

Eeh, whatever, either is fine with me.

"Oraa!"

As revenge, I send a straight right punch with all of my might towards the doll.

The doll without even trying to dodge, my fist hit the white mask as if being sucked towards it. I feel an impact on my fists, and with a dull shock, the doll was blow off behind.

"Ho,How's that...."

It felt like there was quite some response, but someone like me who has never experienced hitting someone, I had no idea of knowing how much damage I might have done. Still, it was enough to blow it away. It'll be nice if he stays that—

“Damn it, looks like it won’t go down that easy.”

The doll easily stood back up. But the mask that took my punch had a crack like a spider web on it.

It enough strength to crack that solid mask yet the doll stood up easily means I have no choice but use magic to destroy it.

It won’t end no matter how much I exchange blows with doll this way. Meaning I’ll have to get serious and try to use magic.

Those guys explained me with the condition that I should use black magic, that means there must be some way to use it. What kind of thing was black magic was unknown but for the time being I’ll try moving the magical power inside my body. For that, I need to highly concentrate.....

“—-guha!!”

In front of the doll who had resumed punching again, there is no way I could calmly concentrate. Even if I try to make it quiet by punching and kicking him away, it’ll get up quickly anyway.

On actually trying it, all my attacks dented the armour but the doll itself seems to be unaffected. But to concentrate I can’t keep on taking punches and there is no place to hide in this hall either. To create a situation where I don’t take attacks—-

“No choice but to grapple it, huh?”

If I stick to the opponent, at least I won’t be punched. I don’t know whether my amateurish thinking would work or not but I don’t have any other choice right now.

Luckily, this doll has only been using punches with a large swing, which means, it won't use different types of techniques probably. Then, if I grapple it from the back it won't use a technique to magnificently counter it like martial artists do and only struggle to tear me off him.

“deyaaa!”

I quickly ran around to the back of the doll that has strangely dull reflexes. Before it could turn around, I kicked his back. Before it could get back up, I climbed on his back. With this my plan was a success. Although I can't keep him completely down like judo specialists, I simply made it unable to get back up from its upper body.

As expected the doll only tried to get up with brute strength. My and the doll's strength is almost equal, if I can keep him down for another 10 seconds at least.....

“gu,u,uooo.....”

Magical power starts circulating within the body, then its flow started accelerating and its volume also increased. I could feel the objects embedded inside my body during experiments reacting to the flowing magical power. I can feel it, magic is strength in itself. If I can release it with this force, I would definitely be able to destroy this doll. I noticed that from my body, instead of sweat, black smoke-like thing was coming out.

I don't feel anything uncomfortable about it. That's because it is surging out from my magical power.

Gigigigi The sound of the doll's creaking started coming, and the resistance became stronger. At the same time I also seem to be unable to hold back any longer.

With this, it's over.

“Daaaaaaaaa!!”

The moment the doll tried push me aside, the magical power compressed in my right hand was released. At the same time my right fist hit the doll's back, the torrent of black magical power pierced through the hard armour like a drill, and penetrated the doll completely.

Probably, even the floor beneath the doll must have been gouged out with my one attack, or so I got the feeling.

“.....”

Not sensing anymore strength from the doll, I threw myself down on the floor just like that.

“I, I did it.....”

What was that magic just now?

I don't really understand but, I just punched with the flowing magical power. Well it's fine. The doll has completely stopped working, it's a relief for now.

—*kashan*

“Huh?”

The sound hard metal armour along with movement of a doll came to my ears.

I definitely defeated that doll just now; even now it's still lying there on the ground without moving a bit.

—*kashan**kashan**kashan*

But, I definitely hear the sound. That's right; there is nothing weird about it. After all that sound is coming from beyond the gate through which this doll came.

It's very simple. There wasn't just a single doll, that's all there is to it.

“.....haha”

At last the door opened.

And a row of dolls rushed into the hall. A total of 10 of them, and each of them lined up and looked at me still lying on the ground.

All of them were similar to the one I just defeated except one thing. All 10 of them had a double-edged sword in their hands.

“Are you kidding me?”

Up till now, under the effect of the various experiments I had resolved for death countless times, but never as much as I did now.

With shaky movements the dolls took up their swords. And, almost together and at the same time, all of them started to charge towards me.

“.....Fuck.”

Chapter 5 – No.49

Some time has passed from the day I first used Black magic.

From 'that day', where I faced the 10 puppets and barely survived on the verge of death even with my modified body, there was a change from my daily life till then. Obviously, in a bad direction.

Still, my low sleeping time or the shit-like porridge or soup or some other weird liquid that was given to me had absolutely no change.

And my main duty of being a part of restructuring and modification magic was now changed to daily monster hunting in the name of maneuvering experiments.

I came to know later, but the 'doll' I faced on the first day was a type of golem. It seems there were other types of golems other than the ones made of rocks and earth. Well, in this period I faced those too.

Anyway, I was forced into fighting various kinds of monsters.

Dolls equipped with various armaments aka light golems, a group of goblins, one-eyed giant, werewolf, double-headed chimaera, a dinosaur-like dragon, a real fire-breathing dragon etc, etc....

I was almost eaten more than once, also got a large hole in my stomach once, got my limbs torn off as well. But still, as long as I won, those masked guys would give me minimum level of healing, and I somehow was able to live up till now.

But, I can't help but feel that if I fail even once, all they would do is throw off my corpse.

After all I'm just No.49. Without even a name, I am just a single experiment. If I become unable to give results, there would be no reason to let me live.

Even so, I refuse to die.

Every day may be worse than death, but still I don't want to die. One day, one day I will definitely leave this place, and return to my previous peaceful life—— It is nothing but a pipe dream now. Even I am not sure as to how long will I be able to continue this happy delusion of mine. I might even die today

From that day, another one of the change is that the time of me being conscious is gradually decreasing. Now, even when my body is awake, the time when I am not self conscious is bigger.

At that time, I know what I do or what I did but actual feeling of doing it by myself doesn't exist at all.

It's like I'm controlling the character of a game. Due to which I neither feel pain nor does it hurt. It is quite comfortable.

But, if the continues forever I am confident I will stop being me. Not Kurono Maou, but I'll end up as only No.49. the fact that this is not far away from reality is extremely frightening——

"No.49, come out."

A line I am used to listening.

Quickly getting up, I went towards the door. Well then, I wonder what kind of monster I will have to kill today.....

I have also gotten used to this circular hall. I have started calling it the arena.

After all, what I am doing is pretty similar.

And today's opponent is-

"A single light golem?"

As if re-enacting the battle on the first day. Just one wearing a mask covered in steel armour and unarmed.

"No, it's different.....is it a new model?"

Light golems usually use weapons. Although there hasn't been a one who could use magic up till now, but I can clearly feel magical power from it.

On top of it, the magical power's nature feels very similar. A user of black magic similar to me huh?

"....."

There does not seem to be any explanation from the masked guys this time meaning I can start anytime.

"Let's do this."

I didn't say this towards my opponent. A small muttering meant to cheer myself up again today.

I'll take the first shot——

"Buckshot!!"

Simply compressing magic together and moulding it into the form of a bullet and shooting it at high speed. Although I call it buckshot, it's nothing but making many small bullets and shooting them together. But it actually became something like a real shotgun.

As such, without any gun barrel or anything, it's fired out of thin air. But this is what magic is; even without a gun you can fire a bullet.

Also, an image is important for using magic. Therefore, shouting the skill name is to help make that image clearer. Although the monsters who used magic didn't do so when fighting me.

Above that what's important is the trajectory of the [buckshot]. It's an attack magic meant to quickly cover a wide range, so the power is a bit lacking but it'll still hurt to take it directly on.

Against small-fry like goblins, you can finish them with just this though.....

But the opponent did not take any impact.

"So it really has a shield....."

And to make it worse he's better at making it than me. To block an opponent's attack with a wall made of magic, I started calling it a shield. When I saw even non-humanoid monsters that could use magic make such shields, I realized that it might be a standard to use such shields.

Of course even I can make a black shield with my magic but, it was able to make such a strong shield in that instant. I thought it would at least crack on getting hit by my [buckshot] but damn, he is completely unhurt.

"—n"

I was to use my next attack but my opponent moved first.

Without any sound, a black flame magic was released.

“uoh, he can even do something like this?”

It’s an attack method I have not tried yet.

A black flickering flame completely covered my surroundings in an instant. But if the opponent is a black magician, I am also one. Resistance towards black magic is not a property of other elements.

“Weak!”

My body is covered in black flames. It’s not as weak as I said, but not enough to leave any fatal burns.

After all, it’s over once I defeat my opponent. The flame disappeared without any damage—

“Shit!?”

From beyond the flame, a jet black mass came flying.

Due to having the same black magic, even though I was late to see it I still somehow manage to evade it.

“That was dangerous. So it was just a diversion ——”

The true identity of the black mass was a black magic version of a fireball made by compressing those flames together.

As it flew by me I realized that with that density of magical power, I wouldn't have gotten away with just a little pain or burns if it hit. But it is still literally insufficient to defeat me.

"Anti-Material!!"

An image of a bullet with much more power packed inside it than [buckshot]. That is [Anti-material Rifle].

It is a high calibre rifle which is not meant to be used against humans.

Imagining the strength to turn a man into minced-meat with one shot and then producing it as magic. Image must be detailed and precise as possible. Inside my brain is the image once shown to me by my military otaku friend. And with a rifling pose, I shoot the materialized black bullet while making it rotate at high speed high speed.

bang!! [T/L note: the sound effect isn't strong enough I know lol]

Instead of gunpowder, black magical power exploded and crashing sound was produced. Whether predicting my counter attack, the opponent had already deployed a strong shield.

But this time it's a bullet focused on strength. As expected my anti-material rifle bullet drilled into the shield but was unable to completely pierce through. Immediately, the shield starts regenerating but—

"One more shot!!"

For the start I didn't think that one bullet would suffice. With another crashing sound, the bullet is released aiming for the exact same point again. With a *bagin* sound the shield was smashed apart.

I shot the exact same place which had become weak with the first shot. With this there was no way it wouldn't break. A control of this level was already learnt by me when penetrating the scales of a dragon.

And the moment the shield breaks, a moment of opportunity will definitely come.

And as expected, due to shock of the shield breaking, the opponent is stumbling a bit.

Here, another round of anti-material would suffice but at this distance it is more efficient to attack him directly than making another bullet.

On the battlefield, fast decisions are necessary. Before the opponent does anything I'll destroy it first!

"Pile Bunker!!!"

The first magic I ever used. The one that pierced through the back of that doll. The activation is simple and thus activation speed is also the fastest.

Before it can fix his posture, I directly aim the chest.

With a compressed density even above [anti-material], the steel armour without any magic is nothing but paper in front of my sure-kill black pile focused in my right hand.

And without any resistance, my fist drilled into the body.

At that moment, a blood splash danced in the air.

"Eh....."

Red blood spread throughout my vision.

My opponent is a light golem. I have defeated them countless times. They don't have red blood inside them.

When force is applied on them, they just break apart like porcelain.

Then, whose blood is this?

"....."

I don't have a single injury. It's my body so I know that the best.

But the blood is still flowing out even now.

That's right, from the chest of the light golem I pierced with my Pile bunker.

"It, It couldn't be....."

I get a bad premonition.

Calm down, there's no way; if this is not a light golem then it must be some other humanoid monster. That's right, many monsters had red blood after all. This guy must also be one of them.

"....."

Assuming that, I should have just returned to my prison.

But, before I realized, I reached close to the mask of this guy with blood still flowing out of his chest.

".....no way."

Removing the mask, what appeared was black hair and black eyes similar to me, a Japanese guy.

“NO!!!”

I killed him? A human? From my own homeland?

No way, that's not it. I didn't mean to do it.

After all this was a monster, If I didn't defeat him I would have been killed. I didn't know. I didn't know my opponent was a human.

.....but if I think about it, wasn't this within my expectations?

If I'm called no.49, then another 48 like me should exist. That's it. This guy was also brought here suddenly, modified, and was 'built' like me to use black magic.

“Sorry.....”

No matter how much pain I took, tears, that had stopped coming out anymore, came back again.

Crying I crouched down there.

As I said a single word of apology, before I knew it, my consciousness had started disappearing.

That day, by self-consciousness didn't come back even once.

I refused to become the 'murderer' Kurono Maou anymore and completely became experiment no.49.

Chapter 6 – White Sacrament

“Welcome to the White Sacrament Third Laboratory your highness Cardinal Ars, 7th apostle Lord Sariel.”

With a hurried greeting they passed through the gate of the laboratory.

“Is Bishop Judas not here?”

While walking inside the usual gloomy passage, Ars asked the man in the white mantle leading them.

“I am very sorry but a summon from the Holy City came in just yesterday. It seems he will not be returning for atleast half a year it seems.”

“Just missed him huh? Well this was an unexpected visit, although it can’t be helped, it is a bit regretful.”

The man sighed with relief on seeing Ars not being too displeased.

The man leading the 2 of them is currently the highest position holder as the proxy of Judas.

Although a proxy, he was the head of a 100 man giant facility, a senior priest. But even he was filled with tension in front of the man who was next to the Pope, a cardinal and an apostle.

Without minding the man’s behaviour, the 2 people calmly continued walking. Along the way, Ars asked the Priest about various things relating to the facility. Soon they had reached their destination, which was the conference room.

“Welcome, your highness Cardinal Ars, 7th Apostle Lord Sariel—”

Inside the room, many other researchers in white mantles similar to the Priest came to meet them.

The Priest and the others were all elder in age to the Cardinal and the Apostle, but all of them were bowing their heads in respect in front of those 2.

“Please, come and have a seat here.”

The Cardinal Ars who sat on the white chair was only 30 years in age but he already possessed a presence fitting for his position. Wearing a special made robe made out of Mithril, he possessed rich blonde hair and sharp forward looking blue eyes. With a face that looked like the heroes of ancient times, that figure of him sitting on the giant armchair was indeed looking appropriate.

Ars who was a Cardinal at the age of mere 30 was certainly worthy of admiration but the woman known as the 7th Apostle Sariel was even more so. Long silver-hair and brilliant red eyes, possessing soft white skin that seemed to assimilate with her white robe was Sariel.

That appearance that looked like a doll was young, very young.

Currently, sitting on the same type of seat as Ars, her feet did not touch the ground. That was how small and delicate bodied she was. Here, she looked the most out of place but, as one those who held the special position of an Apostle, she showed no tension or discomfort at all.

“Well then, please give me explanation regarding the project.”

After both of them sat down and received the documents, the Priest started to speak.

“—this Holy Soldier project is meant to accomplish the holy war without sacrificing any of the Holy citizens living in the Republic, an extremely humane and ideal project. As you already know, the east side of the Arc continent and in the Pandora continent, heresy is prevalent and the area ruled by the evil god extends very extensively. The most effective method to counter this is our church’s very own holy magic also known as white magic, but the number of Priests able to use this miraculous technique and white magicians is absolutely insufficient currently.

The users of white magic are completely used up in the maintenance of the Republic along with the current areas under the control of the church. We have no personnel to send to the East side or the remote Pandora continent.

But still, several clergymen burning with the will to complete their mission crossed to Pandora and are making efforts in subjugation operations but it cannot be said that they have enough people to complete it. So, to counter their evil black magic we shall also use black magic.

Of course, to teach evil black magic to the Holy citizens would be felony against the White God. As such we shall acquire black magic users from heretics, demons, and foreigners.

Fellow non-humans, with same evil power will destroy each other. Fighting poison with poison, if I say so myself. With this methodology in mind, what resulted was the Holy Soldier project.

Currently, the progress of the project can be said to have been going very favourably. Especially, the foreigner summoned 3 months back; experiment no.49 is endowed with high powers enough to be called the culmination of all our research up till now.

His ability will definitely be able to satisfy your highness as well. From here on, with no.49 as main, although ability might fall a little, we plan continue

research to make some adjustments in order to mass produce black magic warriors. Today, we have plans to perform the final baptism on no.49, and by this year, no, end of this month, we shall unveil its ability in the Holy City—“

The priest who was passionately talking was suddenly interrupted by the one who had been without speaking a single word up till now, Sariel.

“Your highness Cardinal.”

It was a delicate and quiet call, but it clearly reached Ars’ ears.

“What is it, Lord Sariel?”

It couldn’t be a question. Ars who knew Sariel’s not-speaking habit wondered in his head.

“Hide.”

With the next word, the doubt in Ars head only deepened further. Without paying any attention to it, Sariel starts taking action and says one more time.

“Hide.”

Sariel stood up from her seat and crawled underneath the giant table. Looking at the weird scene, voices of bewilderment started rising.

“.....Understood.”

“Eh? Your highness Cardinal!?”

Towards the mysterious words of Sariel, Ars decided to obey them.

The 2 with the second highest authority suddenly crawled underneath the table. There was no one who could understand the meaning behind it. For a moment, a dumfounded atmosphere comes inside the room. But the one who brought this atmosphere Sariel along with Ars paid no attention to it. This was because for Ars, the words of an Apostle were always meant to be trusted in.

And as a result of that trust, Ars realized that he had made the right decision.

zuzun——

Vibrations as if coming from the depths of the earth, the sound of the building creaking, and vibrations strong enough to jolt the whole body.

“It, It’s an earthquake!?”

Someone’s shout, clearly expressed the current situation.

At this moment, an earthquake of magnitude reaching 6 had just occurred here.

“uu, uwaaaaa!!”

Screams were coming from everywhere. A bookshelf kept inside the room toppled over and fell on the chairs.

Within the cries of people Ars , ‘so that’s what it was all about’, looked at Sariel with an understanding gaze.

Even during an earthquake which was rare in the Republic, looking at Sariel who showed no change even in such a situation, Ars did not feel the need to even pray to god for his safety.

And soon the earthquake that caused shaking inside the laboratory calmed down after a few seconds.

Both of them came out from underneath the table. On the floor lay all the of the researchers without any exception.

“Is everyone alright?”

Fortunately, nobody had fainted due to the bookshelf falling over and getting hit. While groaning, one by one all of them unsteadily stood up on their feet.

“ Qui, Quickly we must get out of here.....”

“Please calm down. Is this lab not built using ancient historic ruins? If so then there is no way it’ll collapse with just this.”

“Ye, yes.....It is as you say.”

“Still, this is an emergency. Just to be safe we should evacuate. Priest-dono please take evacuation measures without causing any mass panic.”

Regaining their calm with Ars’ words, the priest and the researchers started taking action. If the organisations top is giving out orders, even if some casualties do appear, the situation should be able to be resolved properly.

Without taking much shock from the sudden earthquake, led by a researcher, Ars and Sariel started to leave the conference room.

“Priest-sama! We have trouble!!”

At that moment, a man in white mantle, probably one of the researchers came running in.

Even with Ars and Sariel in his view he did not seem to notice them meaning he must be very impatient right now.

“Calm down. You are in the presence of the Cardinal and Lord Sariel, also the earthquake has calmed down as well.”

The priest warned him for intruding in such a rude manner.

“That’s not it! During the earthquake——”

As soon as he said that, from below vibrations resounded with a thundering sound.

“Wh, What? Is it another earthquake?”

Towards the Priest who got cold sweat, the researcher shouted the continuation of his previous sentence.

“——No.49 has escaped!!”

Chapter 7 – Freedom

From the time I came to this hellish magical world, this was my first experience of sleeping so deeply. After killing a boy similar to me during the maneuvering experiment, I indifferently kept watching without returning to my self-consciousness as my body faced various experiments daily.

That is why I didn't feel anything even when many other experimented boys and girls were done in by these hands. But this faint overlooking consciousness would soon disappear as my deep sleep continued, and I thought my memories of Kurono Maou would also disappear.

Still, the pain, the agony and killing of similar humans was beyond my limit of tolerance. Slowly disappearing like this was in fact what I wished for.

I have had enough. I cannot return to where I was once. I can't even remember the faces of my parents anymore. All that comes in my mind are the faces of that geezer and the masked men wearing that cross and the monsters and other experiments I had killed.

That is why it's fine now. If I disappear now I'll be at ease. There is no need to further cling to this any longer—

And, it was the moment I had given it all up inside my faint consciousness.

zuzun—-

With a thunderous sound, and shocks as if the heaven and the earth were overturned, my consciousness rapidly came back.

“—ha!?”

The moment I woke up, I was on the usual hard floor.

But, my head was clearer than ever before, the usual haziness inside my brain and consciousness had completely disappeared. 'Feeling refreshed' maybe felt like this?

My self-consciousness returned after a long time, my head is clear, blood and magic both were circulating smoothly, and strength filled my whole body.

"This is.....the lab?"

I must have fallen down from the pedestal in the centre. How did it happen was unknown, but the other 2 masked men had also fallen to the floor.

Did they have an accident during an experiment?

I obviously don't have any obligation to help these guys at all. As I looked around the room while wondering what to do, a certain thing caught my eyes.

I had only seen it once but I soon understood what it was.

"The white...ring....."

The item with 7 needles which had forced me into absolute submission. The item which once attached, can never be removed was lying in front of me.

I slowly touched my head with my hand. No matter how much I carefully felt around, all that I could feel was my hair and my scalp.

"Not here.....the ring, it's not here."

Naturally, the ring in front of me was the one that had been attached to my head up till now.

“Ha, hahahaha—”

The ring was not connected to my head.

The one thing restraining me didn't exist anymore. Before I realized, the ring in my hand had already been crushed by my hand.

“ahahahahaha! I am free!!”

That's right, if I am free, I don't have to obediently die anymore!

Maybe due to my excited shouting, the 2 masked men had started getting up using the wall as support.

I approached the masked man near me,

“What, no.49—”

Whether realizing the situation or not, he raised his voice towards me.

“Don't call me by that name.”

With my left I grabbed his collar and lifted him up.

“guha,ha, st, stop it.....no.49.....”

“My name is—”

I raised my right hand.

My condition is perfect. Black magical power instantly focused in my right hand.

“—Kurono Maou!!!”

With all my might I released my Pile Bunker on that annoying white mask.

Without even raising a single voice, his head was smashed to pieces and he became a headless corpse.

“What are you doing no.49?!”

The other mask came running towards me.

Even if he didn’t raise his voice, I could clearly feel his presence. Dealing with him was not a problem.

The masked man tried to stab me with a syringe made of glass as I caught it with my left arm.

“Useless.”

Stealing the syringe just like that, I held it in a reverse grip and took a stance.

“Wait——“

Aiming the nape of the neck I slammed the syringe there.

Maybe I hit a blood vessel, but the poisonous looking liquid inside the syringe was completely injected inside him.

“guhhoouoooo.....”

Holding his neck, the man groaned and fell back on the floor again.

“Rifle.”

Already materialized near my finger, I fire the black bullet on his forehead. With a splash, blood and brains spread all over the floor and the masked man was dead. Since I didn’t know what that liquid was, I would have been troubled if he revived after getting stronger like me after all.

“Well then—- I don’t know what’s going on but this is a chance for me.”

The absolute restraints of ring don’t exist anymore. On top of it, thanks to the experiments they did on me I have become strong enough to kill even a dragon.

Also, the taboo of murder, though unknowingly, I have already committed. I have absolutely no hesitation while killing these white masked bastards. I was easily able to kill these 2. Just researchers alone would never be able to stop me.

You reap what you sow. The ones who made me into such a monster was them after all. Now that I am free, there is nothing that can stop me from getting out of here.

“Let’s do this!!”

Shouting my usual words to cheer up, I broke through the door—-

“——Even though I told you to be careful during the baptism so many times!!”

An angry roar resounds in the conference room.

“Bu, but, the restraint measures were taken as prescribed. He should have been completely powerless.”

“Could the drug resistance be higher than we thought.....?”

“Due to the earthquake, he must have regained his consciousness while the baptism was interrupted.”

“Then call all the guards and capture him!!”

The one who shouted that was the Priest. He came to the conclusion that all the guards must be used to capture no.49 who held a high amount of black magic.

“My humble apologies your highness, the situation is critical, please proceed to evacuation—“

“Calm down Priest-dono, did you not realize why a Cardinal like me came without even a single guard?”

Ars himself knew that the experiment no.49, who had gone out of control, held a high amount of power able to defeat many monsters. But still, he was not worried about a power of ‘that level’.

“Bu, but.....”

The Senior Priest looked towards Sariel who was standing beside Ars. He realized the intention behind Ars’ words.

“But this all due to our mismanagement. We cannot cause trouble for Lord Sariel——“

“Your worries are unneeded. Lord Sariel, can I leave this to you?”

Sariel gave a small nod.

“It seems it is a dangerous one, there is no need to capture him alive.”

Giving another nod, Sarel left with small steps.

“Well shall we go then? There is no need to panic. Soon Lord Sarel will return with the head of this no.49.”



Chapter 8 – Fear of the White

“Shit! Where is the exit...?”

Although I kind of knew it, but this facility is really excessively big. On top it, everything looks the same. There is no way I could not get lost.

Earlier, I kicked apart a white-coloured light armour wearing group but now I am regretting not letting one of them live and getting the info about the exit. Well, it couldn't be helped. They came out of nowhere at me while brandishing their swords after all!

Counter attacking instantly and killing them all is kind of a habit from those maneuvering experiments.

Incidentally, I also took 2 of those double-edged swords from them as well. I don't really have any experience in using swords but my use for them is a bit different. The next time I find someone I'll use the sword to threaten them into telling me the location of the exit.

As I ran through the passage while thinking this, I arrived at a spacious room.

“Stairs!”

Stairs lay on the opposite side of the room leading to the upper floor.

Finally finding a thread of hope in getting out of this place, I ran towards the stairs but stopped as I sensed something coming down those stairs. Under the various experiments, along with the 5 senses, even my 6th sense had been strengthened so this wasn't just my imagination.

As I took a fighting stance, the sound of footsteps resounded.

Soon, the owner of the footsteps came to into view from beyond the dark stairs.

“A girl?”

My expectation of it being masked men or armoured ones was instantly betrayed.

The one who appeared was a completely white girl except for her burning red eyes. She had a young yet beautiful face. And the overly white skin made me think for a moment that she might be another light golem, but the girl in front of me clearly possessed a life force.

Not a doll, but a real albino.

“Stop!”

Although she doesn’t match this place, the white clothes and the cross emblem clearly means that she is related to those masked men.

Without letting down my guard, I first tried to speak words to stop her.

“.....”

The girl stopped moving.

“Who are you?”

Maybe because I didn’t expect it to suddenly turn into a battle, as I hesitated over what I should say, I ended up asking about her identity.

Although as I was sure that she wasn’t an ally I didn’t really expect her to answer but.

“7th Apostle, Sariel.”

Strangely, she properly answered.

Although I had no idea what kind of meaning the title of an Apostle meant, I came to know that her name was Sariel.

“My name is Kurono Maou, I want to leave this place so can you tell me where the exit is?”

“I cannot.”

“Is that so—-“

Well, I didn't really expect her to tell me. Although I was a bit curious as to who this girl was, but I didn't really have the time to care or inquire about it.

If I was against a masked man I would have kicked till he told me but I can't really do that to a girl against whom I don't have any grudges. Although I may have lost my humanity, I still haven't gone that mad.

Therefore, I decide to ignore her and move forward.

Instantly focusing magic in my legs and strengthening them, I take a rocket start towards the stairs.

An ordinary man or a weak monster would barely be able to keep up with such speed. For that it might have been like I instantly disappeared—

“ugaah!?!“

The moment I suddenly accelerated, a shock ran through my left leg.

Losing control over my left leg momentarily, I fell to the hard floor at high speed.

“Wh..at.....“

I found that on my left thigh, a white stake was sticking in very deep.

“You will stop here.”

As I heard Sariel's muttering voice, a chill ran down my spine.

“Are you kidding me.....“

From that girl, I felt an intense magical power, at a level incomparable to any monster, surge from within her. The silver aura enveloping her body, even in a gas-like state, had more density than my pile bunker.

Even if I didn't have any 6th sense I would have realized that she was an unbelievable monster.

"Buckshot!!"

Pulling out the white stake, I fired a buckshot towards her.

The scattering black bullets rush towards the defenceless girl.

Without even a slight reaction, Sariel took on the hail of bullets with her body directly without any problems.

"Shit, without even a shield?!"

The bullets disappeared the moment they touched the white aura.

Her aura is far stronger than the shield used by me or any other experiments. For her it was nothing more than releasing magical energy and was not even actual magic.

Even I have magical energy that is released like that as a part of regeneration, but it holds nowhere near the ability to block a bullet made of black magical energy.

If she can block without doing anything, buckshot cannot be used as a method of restraining the opponent either. It would be a waste of magical energy.

Still, the white magical energy that is the source of the aura is completely different from the one I know.

If using black magical energy results in black magic, then is that white magic?

Frankly, I really don't want to fight something that dangerous but my body has already started moving towards the direction of fighting.

"Blackening."

In my both hands I have the 2 swords I took earlier. The simple longwords were wrapped by my black magical energy and turned completely black from the grip to the tip of the sword. I simply named this condition as [blackening].

The weapons that undergo blackening don't just get stronger but also become able to be used without even moving my hands.

“Automatic Fencing(sword fighting lit.).”

The two blackened swords leave my hand and start floating in the air. The tip of the swords automatically turns towards my opponent.

Fighting while controlling from afar, that is Automatic Fencing.

When using existing weapons as the base for this, the strength is higher than bullets made purely of magical energy. If it's this, it should be able to surpass that aura.

“Pierce through!!”

With my voice, the swords fly like arrows.

Sariel stood there as usual but in front of her white magic started concentrating. And what appeared was a white shield in the shape of an inverted triangle.

“ Rifle!”

I fired the pseudo full metal jacket bullet, and at the same time the swords struck Sariel's shield.

Both of the swords were easily deflected without even scratching the shield. But without minding it, I kept firing the Rifle. The strength was lower than Anti-material but instead rapid-fire was possible.

But, it's a shield that didn't take a scratch from the blackened swords, it wouldn't have any effect no matter how many bullets I fire.

Even when the point of impact was exactly the same, no effect could be seen. Zero plus zero will always be zero after all.

But, I didn't mind that.

The Rifle was just a diversion to keep her focus her. The main intention lied in the two previously deflected swords.

Sariel put up a shield to counter those swords meant that it would have dangerous for her without it. Buckshot could be stopped with just the aura but the swords could not be.

I start controlling the swords that had fallen behind her again.

Aim is obviously the currently undefended Sariel's back.

The attack power is enough to cause instant death but she is also a magician, she might be able to get out alive. Apologising inside my thoughts, I make the swords fly at her at maximum speed.

Sariel doesn't turn back—a certain hit.

“—Wha?”

The moment the swords were about to pierce through that small back of hers, Sariel didn't move at all.

But, right now Sariel somehow held the two swords between the fingers of her right hand.

With just her bare hands?

Just how?

“.....”

Stuck between Sariel's thin fingers, the black swords instantly turned white and disappeared like ash.

“u,a.....”

Can't win.

Instinct, intuition, reasoning, logic, all of them are giving the same conclusion- I cannot win.

I made the wrong choice. I should have never challenged her to a fight.

I should turned and run away at full speed the moment I felt that insane magical energy.

In actuality, there was no need for her to use a shield. No matter how much magic I used, she could have easily overwhelmed it with just her body.

The moment I had entered her line of sight, I could have been killed anytime. I was just left alive because of a simple whim of hers.

In my mind, I had a vision of disappearing like ash similar to the blackened swords.

“.....”

Sariel deactivated her shield.

—Run, my instincts called.

—Run, I can still make it, my reasoning tried to encourage me.

Don't give up just yet! There should be a way to get out of here alive. First of all, I should run. I have to get away from that insane monster no matter how otherwise I don't have a free tomorrow.

“Black smoke—guah!?”

I tried to use a concealment technique derived from the black flames used by the experiment I fought before.

By spraying out the black magic I could activate the magic without any gaps, but finding that small gap, my right shoulder and abdomen were pierced by white stakes.

Still, the magic itself was activated, and the surroundings were instantly covered in black smoke. Inside the black smoke I run back towards the way I came from. It's regretful, but the stairs are too far away.

The first wound I took on my leg was covered with jelly like magical energy. For the time being the bleeding can be stopped, and my body is weak enough to be bothered by pain of this level.

Once again strengthening my legs, I decide to run as far away from her as possible.

The stakes stuck in my shoulder and abdomen comes later.

"Anti-material."

Without turning around I consecutively fired three high calibre bullets towards her. I am well aware that it won't work but at least it could help gain me some time. The moment the third bullet was fired, 5 stakes instantly pierced my back. I had actually deployed a shield just in case but the stakes completely passed through it.

"Guhoooo!?"

I almost fell over but was somehow able to manage to continue running through the passage.

The ones that struck my back were thinner than the previous ones so I was able to handle the shock. And, without looking back, crazily running, I rolled inside a random room.

"haa.....haa..."

For the time being I think I was able to run away from her. The sound of footsteps or the feeling of her presence is not coming.

I don't think I was able to completely run away from her, so in this time I should treat my wounds as much as possible.

"Guu,ugh, it hurts....."

Can't say I have gotten used to pain, only my ability to handle it has increased. What's painful will always be painful.

I pulled out the stakes in my shoulder and abdomen and although it was difficult to reach I was somehow able to pull out the stakes in my back as well.

"I'll be fine as long as my internal organs have not been damaged as well..."

The jelly like magic covering the wounds, if given enough time, will assimilate with the flesh and heal. I wondered whether I needed to disinfect it, but since it makes a complete recovery, it's fine I guess? Thanks to this magic, I was able to treat most of my wounds by myself.

But internal organs with complex functions were unable to be perfectly healed.

Once, when my stomach was completely torn apart by a dinosaur like thing, I was unable to perfectly regenerate my intestines and in the end had to depend on the masked men's magic for complete recovery.

Just how much can be accomplished through magic is still a doubt but I don't have the methods necessary to find out. For now I should think about what I should do from here.

That super dangerous magician girl called Sariel wouldn't let me get away that easily after all.

Sariel's five senses should be much better than mine so she could find me simply through scent. In the worst case she might just 'somehow' figure it out through her sixth sense.

So, I can't really hide here for too long. The risk is too high.

—kotsun

I heard the slight sound of footsteps.

Similar to the time she first came, she is walking calmly and slowly.

Still, the fact that there is no carelessness in her was clearly seen in the previous fight.

Gradually the sound of footsteps is increasing; she is definitely coming straight towards this room.

“Sh, shit! What should I do.....?”

This is not at a level like those previous monsters where I could win if I tried hard.

In front of an absolute gap in ability, it's hard to say that I am able to keep composure.

But I still realized that there was another door in this room different from the one I came in from.

Can't say that I had any plan, I just felt that rather than going outside, it might be better to go further inside.

Although it will be checkmate there and then if it was a simple room beyond that door,.

“—this is!!”

The moment I opened the door, I felt that I was too lucky today.

What lied beyond the door was not another white room, but a long spiral staircase leading downwards.

On looking, it was pitch black there. I didn't know where it would connect to but if I am able to take even a little distance from Sariel, it felt extremely attractive. Without any hesitation, I ran down at full speed.

Sariel was walking through the passage at her usual speed.

She was not walking like this just to induce fear in the weak magician known as No.49—no, Kurono Maou, a foreigner who had a name similar to the Devil King. (T/N: In case you didn't know Maou is the pronunciation for Devil King in Japanese.)

To sense and perfectly track a user of black magic, this was the suitable speed. That is why she did not run. And also because she was clearly showing sympathy towards Kurono.

If she was serious she could have put all those 8 stakes inside of his head instead. Of course, even before Kurono could start attacking.

But she let the opponent, who she could kill in an instant, run away from her.

From here if she were to end up cornering him and he surrendered, she was ready to take that surrender. Although her true feelings were that it would be good if he could run away from her.

“.....”

Still, Sariel thought. Kurono's black magic was not at the level as she had assumed.

Under the effect of many experiments, his body had surpassed the level of ordinary man even without strengthening, but he did not possess the basic fundamental skill or basis required for magic.

At the current stage of the project, the main objective was to create a body holding high aptitude for magic. And the practical and technical knowledge of combat and magic was to be taught from here on. So it was only natural that it was so.

The amount of magical energy is high but circulation, compression, emission and other magical energy control techniques are all rough. The releasing of compressed magic one shot at a time with a single action in itself wasted a lot of magical energy.

The weapon enchantment was extremely irregular, but the precision of remote control and concealment of presence was good. To be able to perceive things outside the view was also done easily. But, to be able to give off attack power equal to an ordinary magician without the minimum required fundamental skill was due to the benefits of body modifications after all.

But, what actually surprised Sariel was not the strength attained due to the experiments but the scheme behind the fired magic.

[Buckshot], [Rifle], [Anti-material] magic fired by chanting it, all had substance in the shape of clear, streamlined cones, and were rotating at high speed as it approached.

Magic is made through images so all magicians, when performing single action, take the shape of orbs, arrows, sword, throwing spear. In Sariel's case it is Stakes.

But in terms of piercing power, Sariel had never seen anything like that rotating cone ever before.

Once properly understood, it can be done by anyone, but where did the idea behind such structure come from?

If her opinion, it might be because he was a natural genius.

But he was a 'foreigner' brought from a different world where magic does not exist. The Church treats those unable to use magic on the same level as monsters.

But don't 'foreigners' also have knowledge as per their own foreign world? No, they definitely possess it.

And, if that cone was created by that foreigner, then Kurono had applied it into his magic aware of the fact that it possessed high piercing power.

Sariel thought that her theory was probably correct. And if it is correct, then they should possess knowledge not known to us as well.

She was a bit curious about it, and if he were to be caught again, he would not be allowed to live, in the worst case she would have to kill him here. She felt it was a bit regrettable.

“

Sariel suddenly stopped moving.

She had no doubt that the door in front of her was passed by Kurono. For a second, Sariel hesitates over whether she should enter or not.

But, now that she was here, she felt would have to make sure and defencelessly opened the door.

There was no ambush or signs of a trap.

Well he didn't really have time to set something like this up so it's only obvious. She thought as she moved towards the different exit inside the room.

Opening the door, what entered her view was a dim spiral staircase leading downwards.

Without descending through the stairs, Sariel threw her body in the space in the centre of the stairs and fell straight towards the unseen hell below.

dozunn!!

Without strengthening her body with magic she landed just like that.

She stood up as she felt almost no shock on landing, but the tiles near her foot had been smashed to pieces.

“Ran away.”

She verified in a single look that he was not here. That is because, at the end of the staircase lay a small well directly connected to an underground water channel. And the remains of black magic could be seen continuing inside that well.

This place is meant for the clergy to cleanse themselves and the only place leading out of the laboratory aside from the main entrance.

It must have been a coincidence that he entered the room leading here but thanks to it he was able to get away from here.

“.....that’s good.”

Moving towards the well, Sariel quietly said.

From the perspective of a girl who was indifferent towards humans and completely expressionless, it was remark that can be considered extremely rare.

As to why she showed such sympathy towards Kurono, that was because his circumstances were extremely similar to hers in the past.



Chapter 9 - Port Town

*kotsun**kotsun*

Footsteps can be heard far away.

A small white figure with shining red eyes started coming closer——

“.....uohh!?”

Shit! Did I just lose consciousness for a moment!?

I quickly stand up and scan the surroundings. I can't feel any other presence. What came to my ears was not the footsteps of the white girl but the sound of the river flowing close by.

“Wh, what the hell happened....?”

I had unhesitatingly jumped into the well that was in the place where the spiral staircase ended. I could hear the sound of water flowing below the well, and hoped that there might be an underground channel that might connect outside.

That plan was brilliantly successful, and now I was standing on ground.

However, I was afraid that it might continue infinitely underground, and when I jumped it was completely dark as well, the water was very cold too. As I flowed I almost lost heart due to fear and anxiety.

But luckily, the dark underground waterway (maybe I should call it a cave) finally opened up somewhere sunlight could reach, and fainted after barely making to the riverbank.

“Aah, I'm outside.”

The sun was shining right above me in the sky, a river flowed beside me, and the surroundings were covered with thick trees and beyond them towering mountains could be seen. I am completely between nature and greenery.

“I did it. I am finally free——”

With a rustling sound the thicket nearby shook.

For a second, my heartbeat became faster and I started sweating unpleasantly.

What came into my mind was the indifferent white face of Sariel.

“.....”

What appeared was an animal very similar to a deer. It probably came to drink water at the river. On looking closely, in that direction many other bodies were also there.

By the way, the reason I intentionally used the expression ‘similar to a deer’ was because I was certain that it was not a deer. This deer-like animal had 3 brilliant horns which were green in colour. A fantastic animal like that didn’t exist in my world.

Well, if they evolved in this world, maybe such deer might be born as well. After all, this is a world of magic where even a fire breathing dragon exists. In the first place, does Darwin’s theory of evolution even apply in this world?

“Wait wait, before that, I should run far away from here first.”

I am somewhat tired but the wounds give by Sariel have more or less healed, so moving around is not a problem. At times like these, I was thankful for this modified overly sturdy body.

But still, even with a body like this there are beings above monsters against whom I can do nothing.

Maybe, guys like that might exist all over the world. If that is so, then it will be dangerous to overestimate my abilities. If a bunch of similar guys come to search for me, I am finished.

Where is safe? Where should I go? That is still unknown but at least I need to go as far as possible from that facility.

“Time to leave.”

Without any guide or directions, I decided to go downstream from here.

The fear of the fact that I might be still chased after by Sariel, kept my legs moving even when my stamina had run out.

I kept walking for 3 days and 3 nights straight through mountains and forests. I only stopped for toilet and to drink water from the river.

I thought I might upset my stomach like this, but to me who had been living on shit-like soup, the clear water of the river was way too delicious. In the end I did not upset my stomach. Though, it did become a bit flabby because I drank too much. And at times when I was attacked by dog or wolf like monster, I chased them away with buckshot and rifle, but didn't chase them too far.

And on the evening of the fourth day,

“.....lights.”

In front, I saw lights of people living. As I saw it I started running with joy. But, in the middle I thought.

“Wait, it could be people connected to those masked men.”

Maybe researchers, in the worst case, Sariel herself could be there.

I don't know anything about this world except that it has monsters and magic. On top of not having common sense, this ragged look would definitely catch attention.

Catching attention meant standing out in public, as a runaway I want to avoid that at all costs.

And this might be negative thinking, but there is a chance that I have already been put on the wanted list.

As an experimental subject, I didn't know how much value I held for those masked men. If this was a country wide large scale project, they would go through any lengths to search for me. Basically, it was dangerous for me to carelessly come in contact with the people of this world.

As I thought that, the town had come into my view. Enduring my want to see other people, I held my breath and decided to infiltrate the town.

This was a port town surrounded by a stone wall. A salty breeze floated in the air.

I came to this conclusion after watching the people come and go through the gate and going all around without getting noticed by any soldiers.

And, I confirmed that this world's civilisation level was at the Middle-ages level.

The stone wall might have been left due to cultural reasons but it was actively being used. The roads were not made of asphalt, people in armour with lances, the light at night was due to fire lamps, etc. There was not even a single modernistic thing familiar to me.

From the time I was in that experiment facility, I had expected that it might be so as there was no electritown, and monsters were equipped with swords and bows. But after seeing this typical town, my expectations were right it seems.

“It really is a different world.....”

I felt a bit of despair creeping in, but right now I didn't have the time to be worried due to the anxiety in my heart.

I'll look for a way to get back to my world after I have settled somewhere far away from here. Once again, I return my thoughts to the town in front of me. The fact that this is a port town might be favourable for me.

Rather than going by land, I could go farther and faster through the sea. At least, in a world where aeroplanes don't probably exist, ships are the fastest means for moving.

Of course, that's only if there is no magic device through which you could warp or teleport.

Anyway, for me who has no other objective other than going as far away as possible, a ship is an attractive existence. Here, by any means possible, I want to board the ship that is going the farthest from here.

Of course, I, who can't come into contact with other people and without any money, have no will to properly board a ship.

Basically, I'll smuggle myself.

“Alright, now that I have decided my objective, I should go to the town now.”

Making sure that there are no people in the vicinity, I put my hand on the wall.

On the precisely crated vertical wall there is no place to place my legs. That means it's the turn for the reliable black magic. I convert the black magical energy into sharp material in front of my hands and legs.

If I try hard I can even cut through the scales of a dragon, cutting through a stone wall is a piece of cake.

And thus began my first ever wall climbing challenge.

The strong claws unified with my fingertips cut through the stone wall as if cardboard was cut with a knife. Similarly, my legs also pierce through, and easily fix into the wall.

The height of the wall is about 5 meters. It's not really a wall climb with the life on the line but if it's my body, I'll probably be unscathed even if I fall from the top. The ground is pretty soft as well. And, thus while grasping the essentials of wall climbing, I steadily quickly climbed the wall.

"ooh, I'm like a ninja, aren't I?"

And thus, while feeling like those who melt into the night, I finished the climb.

If I stood up on the wall to make a pose, I felt that I would be seen after all, so while crouching I viewed the interior of the town.

"ooh, although I had expected, it really is amazing....."

There, the townscape similar to that of ancient Europe only seen in movies and anime could be seen.

Along with stronger eyesight, I had also become able to clearly see at night. So, I could perfectly see the town even in this dark night.

Rows of white coloured houses, the biggest main road was made of stone, and stores with lamps releasing light could be seen. During the day, the roads must be filled with carriages with goods moving around.

And at the centre of the town stood a church with the tallest roof. Moving further down the main street, you would arrive at the port where many ships were currently anchored.

It's currently night, so not many people can be seen other than on the main street. The residential area has already become quite after putting out the lights.

"Moving towards the port along the wall sounds good."

After memorizing the panoramic view of the town and deciding a rough route to the port, jumped down from the stone wall.

Height like the spiral staircase would be dangerous but a height of around 5 meters isn't much of a problem.

With a *dotto* dull sound, I landed on the ground and quickly moved away from there. While at maximum attention, I quickly ran through the alleys of the residential area.

Chapter 10 - Pandora Continent

Due to residential area being asleep at this time, I was able to reach the port safely without being seen by anyone.

I couldn't exactly risk creeping into any random ship, so I hid myself in a warehouse like place where goods meant to be loaded or maybe taken from the ships were kept, and carefully looked at the surroundings.

Although I call it a warehouse, giant containers like in the present world don't exist, so they were only buildings at the height of 2 stories max.

Maybe because it was night, there was no one going in and out of the warehouses, and only the biggest warehouse seemed to have lights burning indicating that people were working there.

I attentively approached that warehouse and peeked inside. It seems they were hurriedly loading the goods here in a certain ship.

I tried to listen carefully to the talk of the men working inside and was able to catch some of it.

"Why so late—"

"Seriously, we didn't even have had time to drink after returning."

Men with very sailor-like big and darkish bodies were carrying goods while complaining about something. Especially big cargo was put on the carriage stopped near the entrance.

"—but, is there any need to sail out in the middle of the night?"

"It's a hurried re-supply of goods, or something like that."

"What do you mean by hurried re-supply? It's not like we are at war."

Resupply goods meant that the ship belonged to the army of this world, no, country it seems. The country doesn't seem to be at war, but it's a world filled with monsters after all. There is an opponent to fight daily for them.

"No, I don't know if it's pioneering or further colonisation, but the actual place seems to be in quite a mess."

“That’s why they are always recruiting mercenaries? It was a good decision to not go.”

They said something about [Pioneering] and [Colonisation]? What? Is this world still in the Age of exploration and discovery?

But to so smoothly talk about [mercenaries] like this really gives of a fantasy feel.

Anyway, this might be a chance for me. If this is like the colonial ruling done by the western countries as taught in our world history, then this [colony] would be a far away land from this country beyond the sea.

“What the hell do they mean by ‘Pandora continent is heaven filled with riches’? It’s just a hell filled with demons and monsters.”

Hmm [Pandora Continent]..

I don’t know whether it has any connection with the Pandora’s Box, but by their way of speaking, it seems it is a totally different continent not connected by land.

Running away to that far away Pandora Continent sounds ideal. And by the sounds of it, the colonisation doesn’t seem to be moving smoothly as well. Then it would be impossible for them to do wide search for me there.

Living a survival based life far away from home in an unexplored region similar to the old Japan war is not something I cannot do. Sure, it won’t be very comfortable, but compared to living in that experiment facility, it was similar to heaven.

Maybe, I could even take shelter with these [Demons]. I don’t know whether this [Demons] literally means a demonic race or is meant as a derogatory word for the ones originally living there, but as long as they are kept on the same level as monsters, it means they would have no connection to those masked men.

At least the geezer and the masked seem to be of the same race as the ones carrying the goods, basically humans. That means they are not of the same race as the ones living on the Pandora continent.

To run away from those masked men, my maximum priority is to get on this ship going towards the Pandora continent. I have decided I’ll cross over to the Pandora continent!

“Well then, how should I board it—-“

Worshipping the White light God and carrying crosses, the ones who controlled the west-side of the Arc continent was the Syncrea republic.

The Holy City Elysion, ‘the city which has received the divine protection of light’, is the capital of the Republic and also the sacred ground for the church.

Inside one of the many churches that existed in Elysion, the chief of the White Sacrament Third Laboratory, Bishop Judas was meeting with the 7th Apostle Sariel.

“——then you fought while in sealed state?”

“Yes.”

The two sat on one the benches beside each other with some distance between them.

Although they didn’t look at each other while talking, Judas suddenly moved his line of sight towards Sariel.

“.....Come.”

With a single word, on top of Sariel’s head, a ring giving off white light appeared.

It was a different one from the one put on experiment No.49, but it was definitely the same type attached to human experiments for thought control.

Judas stretched his hand towards the ring and lightly moved his finger.

“Magical energy restriction limit at 80%, technique chaining in freeze state, armaments not allowed——maximum sealed state huh?”

On the ring, the health and actions of the person are recorded as well, and the supervisor/controller has the right to read it. Judas was reading the records of the battle with No.49.”

“Yes, there was no time to get release authorization.”

“Even though the Cardinal was right beside you?.....It seems he really has a habit of overestimating the powers of the Apostles.”

As his(Ars’) tough face came to his mind, he also remembered that Ars was also unusually attached to Sariel.

Even though he is known for his cleverness and cool-headedness, to feel obligated just because his life was once saved in the past, it seems Ars has a strange honest part in him as well.

“There was insufficiency in facing experiment no.49. Cardinal Ars’ decision was not wrong.”

“But you cannot call it correct either.”

“

Just in case, he should have given release authority at that time.

Even an Apostle, under the biggest seal, cannot show power more than first class magicians.

“There is no one here other than me. No matter what you say, it won’t reach anyone else’s ears.”

“No, even if I was not sealed, I could not have stopped the escape of no.49.”

“That may be so. You let him go intentionally after all. The amount of power used was not a factor.”

Judas didn’t realize, but Sariel was slightly frowning right now.

“I’m not going start blaming now. The moment he was out of our control, it was all our responsibility.”

The ones who summoned the foreigner known as [Kurono Maou] to this world and turned his body into black magic user experiment no.49 were Bishop Judas himself and his subordinate researchers after all. Sariel only happened to be there and pursued him out of ‘good will’ towards the co-operators. Even if she failed, she was in position to be criticized.

Although, the only one in the Syncrea Republic who had the authority to reprimand an Apostle was the top the church i.e. the Pope only.

“Rather than that, what surprised me more is that you took an action based on emotions. I had long forgotten that you also once used to be human.”

Sariel this time showed absolutely no reaction at all.

Even if Judas’ words held sarcasm or contempt, she had long lost the emotional ability to mind such things.

“Well it’s alright; let’s end this as per schedule. Living in the Holy City is boring but that doesn’t mean I have free time.”

Judas once again touched the ring still shining above Sariel’s head.

“.....Disappear.”

The moment he said that, the ring scattered after getting smashed to pieces and vanished after becoming grains of light.

“With this, there is nothing to left to restrain you, you can even kill me right here.”

“Thank you, but you’re taking the joke too far Bishop.”

“All those who had their seal removed would straight away aim for my life you know. Of course, you are only the second to have the seal completely removed though.”

The first one without the seal, no.49, if he appeared, Judas was sure he would try to kill him(Judas) without any exception.

But, he doubted no.49, whose whereabouts were still unknown, would go through all the risk just for revenge.

After all he was made to live through days where dying would be better. If for some reason he got caught, the risk of returning to those days was too high. He wouldn’t throw away his valuable freedom just for the sake of revenge.

Even if he was an irrational fool, then he would be too scared and will instinctually not decide on revenge.

Judas was that aware of the gravity of the acts he did, but still he felt neither regret nor guilt.

“Well, with this I’m done with my business here. You also have some work to do right? Who and how many do you have to kill next?”

“Demons and monsters. I’ll kill as many as required till the whole continent can be claimed.”

“Reclamation huh? Then the next place you’ll be dispatched to is..”

“Yes, Pandora Continent.”

Kuro No Maou

- Volume 2 -

Everyday Life in a Different World

Chapter 11 - Meeting with a fairy

With a vibration shaking the whole body, my consciousness woke up a little from deep sleep.

“nn.....uunn.....just 5 more minutes mom.....”

Is what I say but, my mom who would never allow her son to indulge in laziness would soon pull away my futon and kick me awake.

But, it has been a long time since I slept so soundly. Even if this heaven-like moment would end in the next ten seconds, till the last moment, I want to—
——-

bashan

“uuoh! Cold!?”

Due to the sudden attack of cold water on my face, my consciousness that was drifting in between dream and reality was completely brought back to the cruel reality.

“Even if I wasn’t waking up, splashing water on my face is too cruel mom—
——”

I soon realized that the figure of my mother was nowhere to be seen, in the first place, this isn’t even my room.

Clear blue sky, lush green trees, in the surroundings laid pieces of wood splinters and red apples, and near my legs was a white body crouching and shivering while shaking its head.

“Wh, what.....”

No wait, calm down. That’s right I sneaked into a cargo meant to cross to the Pandora continent. And that cargo was a wooden box filled with a red fruit similar to an apple. So that means the wood and the fruits around me are the remains of that box.

Also, I have no recollection of this forest. During my sleep did something happen due to which I was smashed here along with the box?

I didn't know exactly what happened but, probably an accident or something happened during transport.

But, leaving my situation behind, no matter how I think about it what I can't understand is the white body in front of me.

"Seriously, what is this.....?"

At first I thought, it was a humanoid stuffed toy or something.

A big head and small limbs, looks similar to 3-4yr old child.

But, what's weird is that this child's (assumption) body is faintly glittering, and on its small back 4 wings of light were growing out. The wings of light aren't really making me feel uncomfortable but this child is completely nude.

".....Is, is it a fairy?"

When I looked at such a figure, I could only think of that.

But, to think that I am seeing fairies now, I must be pretty damn tired.

Well I was suddenly thrown into living a daily life filled with torturous experiments; the level of despair would make anyone tired.

Wait, wait, calm down and think. This is a world filled with magic and monsters; it's not strange for fairies to exist either.

It's not strange but why is it shivering while crouching in front of me? If I keep seeing it like this I'll start feeling pity, so I should try to talk.

"Hey, are you alright?"

"!?"

Oh it just jumped in response.

"What happened, does it hurt somewhere?"

"....."

After a full 30 second silence, the fairy timidly turned her face towards me.

Literally shining platinum blonde long hair and transparent emerald green eyes. Underneath those round and cute eyes, tears can be seen.

Wha, what is this cute creature!?!.....

I am definitely not a lolicon, but I can't deny that I just had love at first sight level of heart beating.

"....."

Under my hot gaze, the fairy timidly stood up and quickly ran away and hid herself in the shadow of a tree. Shit, she was too cute and I ended up staring at her. Did I make her too cautious of me?

".....uu"

Did she run away, or so I thought, but from the shadow of the tree she peeked while showing only her face and asked with a small voice.

"Are you alright?"

"Huh?"

For a second I could not understand the meaning of that bell-like beautiful voice.

Isn't that my line? Why is Ms. Fairy worried for me?

"Came falling."

Huh? As I wondered what she was talking about, I realized that her gaze was indicating behind me.

As I looked back, a steep cliff was there. Did I fall from there?

"ohh."

I look at the wood splinters and apples again. The box in which I was must have fallen from the top of that steep cliff and fallen inside this forest along with me.

Then, the one who splashed water at me and woke me up was Ms. Fairy over there?

"Were you trying to help me?"

While shaking her neck she gave a deep nod.

“Is that so? Thanks. I’m fine. Not a single injury.”

To be uninjured even after falling from such a height is thanks to my modified body. I’m happy I didn’t cause the cute little fairy any useless worry.

“That’s good.”

Seeing her gentle smile, I realized I received kindness in this world for the first time. That’s right; there are people even in this world that may worry for me.

“Aah, really, thanks a lot—“

As I was immersed in delight, I noticed another important fact.

I was able to communicate with the fairy. I was talking as if it was natural, but isn’t that actually amazing?

“aah, umm, you can understand my words right?”

“?”

As I calmed down from her figure tilting her head to one side like a little bird, I regretted asking a weird question out of nowhere.

Considering her reactions up till now, her intelligence might also be at the same level as her appearance. Then maybe it would be better to interact with her as I would with a child.

Well, I don’t really have any experience dealing with children other than with that cheeky brat of our relatives though.

“My name is Kurono Maou, you are?”

I tried to be as gentle as possible but, normally the child would run away after seeing my villainous face at this timing. But, Ms. Fairy was a fairy after all, she clearly answered me.

“.....Li, Lily.”

“Lily?”

“Yes.”

With another small nod, she hid half of her face behind the tree in embarrassment.

Every action is really cute!

“So, Lily do you know where this is?”

“This is Fairy Garden, a place where fairies live.”

A forest where fairies live, I see.

Lily helped me, so I don’t think they hold any strong hostility against humans——

“aaaaah!!”

“Who is it!?”

“!?”

A voice other than mine or Lily’s comes from behind.

As I turned to see, a ball of light floating in the air came into my sight.

Before I realized, many other similar balls of light appeared and are flying in the surroundings.

“Why is there a human here?!”

The ball of light that previously shouted, said while coming close to my face.

On looking closely, it was a body of around 15cm and had wings similar to Lily’s

“Could it be, you are a fairy?”

“Obviously! Can’t you see?!”

As if I would know. I am seeing this for the first time.

But rather than rebutting her, I should get some info by talking to this fairy.

“I am——”

“This is a holy forest where we fairies live! Humans should leave immediately!!”

“Huh!?”

Before I could even name myself, I was instantly asked to get out instead.

What the hell? Aren't fairies supposed to be a race more friendly with humans? No, that might be my own impression only.

At least Lily tried to help me, and even showed bashful cute reactions too!

“Also Lily, you were here too?”

Ignoring me, it flew towards Lily.

“It's not good coming to such interior parts by yourself.”

“uu.....I'm sorry.”

“Along with that human, a pseudo-fairy is also not allowed to come in here. You know that right?”

I didn't know the circumstances of the Fairy Garden but I realize that Lily is being treated differently than by the other small fairies.

Without knowing anything, I don't really have any right to speak but I can't shut up and let the first person in this whole world who showed me kindness make such a sad face.

“Oi, you don't really have to put it that way, do you? Lily came to help me.”

“What you really don't know anything? The fountain of light inside Fairy Garden must not be approached by anyone other than fairies. That is why a human like you and a pseudo-fairy like Lily must not come this inside the forest!”

“I am certainly a human but what's this about Lily being a Pseudo-fairy? No matter how I see it, she is a fairy isn't she?”

“Don't say something so foolish. Where have you seen such a big fairy? She is a Half-human half-fairy possessing the magical energy of a fairy along with a flesh body. Neither a proper human nor a fairy, a Halfling. Seriously, something like this could be known at first glance. ”

Like I said, I won't know something like that. In the first place I have no idea about the biology of this world.

But during the maneuvering experiments, there were monsters that had magical energy but didn't possess life force. Something you could only call as a ghost or spirit.

This small fairy was definitely the same. Only magical energy can be sensed though the quality is different.

Probably, fairies were made completely of magical energy.

As compared to that, I could clearly sense magical energy similar to the other fairies from Lily but could also feel a life force as well. I finally understood what this fairy was saying.

"If you understand then leave now. I'll overlook this so be thankful human."

"ku....."

The fairy's manner of speaking was a bit irritating but I had no reason to damage this 'fountain of light'. And I want to avoid quarrels with the beings of this world as well.

I should control my anger, and leave quietly as the fairy said.

But my heart really pained to see Lily's sad face on being called a pseudo-fairy.

"ah, that's right, goblins seem to have settled down in the west cave so quickly take care of that as well Lily."

"un, I understand."

"woah woah wait a minute? You're going to make Lily fight against monsters?!"

I was surprised at the fairy ordering something like that as if it was natural, though Lily accepting it so readily was also surprising.

"ughh you're irritating! It has nothing to do with an outsider stupid human like you."

"Stupid was unnecessary! Or rather, isn't it dangerous?!!"

“Monster extermination is a usual thing. Even a pseudo-fairy won’t lose to low level monsters who can’t even use magic.”

“Is, is that so?”

As I looked towards Lily with an uneasy expression, I really can’t imagine her fighting monsters. But by her way of speaking, it meant she could use magic.

If she could attack with magic, then the size of the body was unrelated to strength. Even I could defeat a dragon after all.

“if you understand then both of you hurry up and leave! How long do you intend to remain here? Do you want me to use strength?!”

The ball of light started flickering strongly. Was she trying to intimidate me?

“I get it! Fine! I’ll go so don’t start firing magic from behind.”

And so, I and Lily left this place.

Lily enviously looked at the fairies taking the scattered apple like fruits with them deep inside the forest.

“Did you want to eat that?”

“Yes.”

It’s fine. I’ll bring some later.”

“!?”

I’ll do it later. We’ll eat together okay?”

“Th, Thank you!”

Looking at the smiling Lily, I somehow felt healed.

Chapter 12 - Fairy

A fairy is a life-form made purely out of magical energy and does not possess a flesh body.

It might sound unbelievable, but fairies are born directly with a proper ego/personality and knowledge. On top of it, they are not born from a mother but, with the magical energy of the earth and the divine protection of the fairy queen they are born similar to the blooming of a flower bud. A real life setting similar to – a stork bringing babies or babies coming from cabbage fields. Until you don't see one born in front of your own eyes, it's an unbelievable fantasy life-form.

So, these fairies can make contact with material substances, but since they don't possess an actual body they don't really have an animal's survival instincts.

Life-forms made out magical energy don't possess the 3 basic desires i.e. sleep, appetite, and sexual desires.

In case of fairies, even if they can sleep for resting their minds, food is absolutely unnecessary, and so neither is excretion required. On top of it, they don't have men either. They are a life-form similar to an ideal entertainment idol.

Again, they are all born in the form of a young girl and will remain the same until they disappear. Even though they are all females, the reason the species doesn't go extinct is because there is no need for reproduction. And they don't age probably because they don't really have an actual body.

For them to keep on living, what's required is an environment similar to the forest of fairies which has a dense magical energy. As long as they can replenish their magic, fairies can keep on living.

Even though they have the same level of intellect as humans, due to not having any instinctual desires, there are no disputes among them, again for the same reason they don't possess any kind of culture either. They are one of the few races that have remained the same from the ancient times.

Since there is no other requirement for survival they don't have any work and spend 24 hours talking and playing around.

From the start, fairies were a race who loves freedom and chattering it seems. Somehow they are very similar to children.

Even though they don't require it, they enjoy sleeping under the warm sun and eating delicious food as a source of pleasure.

That was why they carried away the apple-like fruits. And so, they eat, sleep, and play in rotation every day.

On listening this, I wanted to become a fairy myself but fairies are a very exclusive race. Shouting hysterically and driving me away showed that part of them.

And thus, the half-human half-fairy Lily was also affected by it. Even though she was born as a fairy she was subjected to ostracism.

“——I see it must have been hard. Shit, I feel like crying.”

“Don't cry Kurono.”

I listened to Lily's life story as we ate the apples (well it's not exactly an apple but I'm going to call it that.). It really was a heart wrenching story.

I'm already emotionally attached to Lily, and Lily too has started calling me without any honorific; we are not at the level of acquaintance anymore.

That's right, we are already friends! We should be...it would be nice if we are.

Well leaving the fact whether we are friends or not aside, we were talking about Lily.

“To have been alone from the time you were born is too damn sad.....”

Since Lily possessed a proper body she also had survival instincts that meant that she had to eat to survive. She had to sleep to remove fatigue as well. Basically she had to work to find food and also secure a place to sleep, that too within this forest all by herself.

“It's fine. I have a proper house as well.”

The home she talks about is a small hut currently in front of us right now.

This extremely aged hut built like a log house was once used by a magician a long time ago it seems. When that magician died, his body was carried to the graveyard by the neighbouring villagers but his house was left as is.

And when Lily was born, she was driven out of the fountain of light so she started living in this hut near the forest.

“What do you do about food?”

“I pick up fruits and mushrooms. Also, I buy bread from the village.”

“Huh? You can do shopping!? What about money?”

“I pick up medicinal herbs and make medicines out of it.”

“And you sell it in the village for earnings?”

“Yes. Only occasionally though.”

“Amazing! That’s really brilliant!”

She is able to earn her livelihood even though she is so small. Compared to a modern child like me who has to do nothing but go to school, she is certainly amazing.

“ehehe.....”

Maybe because she was embarrassed on being complimented, Lily was started squirming with her face down.

You should be more proud of yourself!

“If you’re living alone, can’t you leave this forest and live in the village?”

“No.....Fairies can only live in places which have received the divine protection of the Queen.”

I don’t know whether it was a rule or not, but still Lily didn’t want to be separated from this forest even though she was not a full fairy.

Even if there was no rule, this place is her birth place after all. I can understand the feeling of not wanting to leave this place.

“But, aren’t you being forced to do dangerous things like fighting monsters by those fairies?”

"It's fine. I have been doing this from a long time. This is the only thing Lily can do for them."

"Lily wants to protect the fountain of light even though you were driven out of there?"

"Yes."

There's no way it wasn't painful for her yet there was strength in her reply. I shouldn't make anymore unnecessary conversation regarding this.

"Is that so? Then I won't stop you. But this time I'll do the goblin extermination in exchange."

"Eh!? No! It's Dangerous!?"

Lily was aware that it was dangerous for a human to fight monsters even if they were low grade monsters.

But unfortunately, wait, here I should call it fortunately right? I was no longer a normal human.

"It's fine! Even though I look like this, I'm a magician!"

"Magician?"

Lily stared at me absentmindedly with her mouth open. Looking at my own figure reflected in those big eyes of her I realized.

"Sorry but Lily is there something I can wear? Also tell me if there is a river nearby where I can wash my body."

My outfit is still the same plain white clothes given to me in that facility. On top of that it has 8 big holes I got during my fight with Sariel. Also, after escaping, I crossed the mountains for 3 days in the same outfit. It had become dirty as well as worn-out. Similarly, I haven't washed my body for that many days as well. Although I might not realize it myself, but my body definitely smells bad....

No matter how I look at it, I look like a vagrant with a bad nature. I don't look like a magician from any angle.

"Umm, River is that way, as for clothes....."

“No, it’s fine if you don’t have any. For the time being I’ll first go and wash—
— wait, maybe I should first kill off those goblins, it feels like I’ll get dirty again.”

“You’re going to go now?”

“Yeah, I’ll wash my clothes after returning. Well then, Lily, guide me to this west cave where the goblins are.”

“ye, yes.”

Maybe because she is still worried, she is making a troubled face.

“It’s fine! Just leave it to me. If it gets dangerous I’ll run. I have some confidence in running away.”

After all, I was able to run away from that crazy evil experiment facility after facing that monster class albino girl. An encirclement of goblins is nothing.

“un, follow me!”

Led by my enthusiasm (?), lily began guiding me there.

All right! I’ll show my strong point to the first person who showed me kindness!

I braced myself and started following Lily.

Chapter 13 - Goblin Extermination (1)

“——there.”

While hiding in the shade of a tree, Lily pointed towards a part on the rocky cliff.

“ooh, there are definitely goblins there.”

The main entrance seemed to be a cave of around 3m and around it were three more small entrances of about 1m. Neither of them is very big, but for goblins who are at most 1m in height, it is sufficient.

The goblins here seem to be the same type as the ones I faced during the maneuvering experiments.

The ones at that time were equipped with sturdy armour and sharp blades but the ones here are wearing just old rags and are equipped with what looks like weak handmade weapons.

The level of equipment was definitely low, but they seemed to be more than used to these weapons.

“I’m confirming this just in case but, it’s fine to kill all of them right?”

I had long lost any hesitation in killing living things including humans, but I didn’t feel like showing Lily a blood-filled scenery either.

Although I doubt Lily would have any reluctance towards killing considering she has been doing this for a long time, but still I decided to ask just in case.

If she got scared due to me over-killing the goblins, I would be pretty sad.

“Yes, if you leave even one goblin then another 30 would come, so you must properly exterminate them all.”

“Is, is that so? I see.”

I felt a really big gap seeing her say things like [extermination] as if they were cockroaches. (T/N: I think here Kurono is talking about Gap Moe probably. Google gap moe if you don’t know what it is.)

Is the pure cruelty special to only children, I wonder?

Well whatever. That's one thing out of my mind at least. As asked, I'll leave not a single one alive.

"All right. Well then I'm off!"

Without really trying to hide myself, I directly move towards the cave.

"——Load."

This technique of creating multiple bullets before the start of battle so that I can fire consecutively was developed while I was cramped in that box while crossing to the Pandora continent. I had lots of free time after all.

The amount of bullets I can stock isn't very big, but for now being able to concentrate 3 times my usual firepower on the first turn is enough.

"Blackening."

I use it on the 1m long 4 wooden branches that I collected while coming here. I had carrying it underneath my armpits till now, now I can control them without touching them. I make the 4 black sticks stay behind me.

"——alright."

As I stand on top of a large boulder, I can clearly see the entrance of the cave. From here, I won't miss any goblins either.

Roughly, 20 goblins can be seen out of which around 13 of them are armed. There are probably more of them hiding in the cave. And as I saw the goblins, at the same time the goblins near the entrance were also able to clearly see me.

Not wanting to welcome the human who suddenly appeared, the faces of those goblins that looked like a mix of frog and monkey quickly distorted and looked at me with hostility.

"gyoaahhhh!!"

I don't know whether it was a signal for its companions or just a war cry but with the the shout the goblin entered a fighting stance.

"That's right! Come at me——-wait Lily!? Why are you here!?"

“?”

The moment I was about to fire my magic, I became aware of the white shadow flickering near my legs. I was sure she was in the forest waiting patiently, so why is she so nonchalantly coming to the front lines!?

But, now I can't just run away while holding Lily either.

Lily has some experience in fighting monsters so it's probably unnecessary to worry about her.

Aaagh! I'm still extremely worried!!

“Lily don't leave my side. It's dangerous!”

“Ok.”

Did she understand or not? Lily looks at me with a puzzled face.

I'm seriously worried but I don't have time worry about it for now.

“Alright, let's go!!”

Once again motivating myself, I face the goblins. Out of the 13 armed ones, 2 were equipped with bows. Maybe due to the noise, 4 more goblins with bows and 10 others also jumped out of the cave. The rest, all equipped with spears and swords, charge towards me.

“Rifle.”

First I'll take out the long ranged ones. Before the six bow users could release even a single arrow, the fake full metal jacket bullets pierce through their heads.

Since I had them loaded in advance, I could fire all of them at the same time rather than one by one.

“Buckshot.”

The next aim was towards the ones charging straight towards me.

I had defeated the bow users in the time required for a single shot so the attack group had not yet reached close enough to me. That distance was approximately 10 meters. Perfect to finish with Buckshot.

The already loaded 4 buckshot were fired and immediately covered the whole area in front of me in the form of a barrage. Having neither shields nor the time to evade, it pierced through the bodies of the goblins.

The goblins in the front were completely annihilated on a level that it was impossible to know which of the bullets had been the fatal one. There were even some whose thin arms and legs had been blown away.

“gih, gieaaha!!”

Goblins who had avoided a fatal blow due to their companions becoming a shield for them raised a cry of anger and anguish and continued to charge towards me. Behind them were the ones who still unhurt, and again, more reinforcements appeared from the cave.

It seems they won't retreat with just this, or maybe they don't possess the intelligence to plan a retreat; either way, if they are coming then it'll only help me save time so I'm glad actually.

“Gatling.”

Sticking out my right hand, I start using Gatling for sweeping fire.

Gatling automatically does the process of firing bullets so I am able to focus solely on creating bullets. This results in rapid firing faster than rifle.

But, using my right hand as a barrel, I can only fire in a straight direction from it with some slight aiming only. Thus it is effective against groups charging straight from the front. The opponent will indirectly get inside my range after all.

And so, without any means to defend against or avoid the bullets on the same level as Rifle, the goblins charging here one by one turned to minced meat.

This was not a battle but looked more like a one-sided massacre.

Nevertheless, the goblins kept on charging inside the kill zone of the black bullets.

Due to dead bodies of their companions slowing them down and my bullets flying all over, the distance between me and the goblins remained the same. When I thought that it was about time that I started moving towards the cave as well, it was at that moment.

“uoooooh!!!”

A loud roar shook the surroundings. While firing the Gatling, I looked towards the source of that roar.

It was probably a part of the reinforcements coming out of the cave and had no difference in looks compared to other goblins. But the big hatchet held in its hand strangely stood out.

The goblins here mainly used handmade bows and spears which was definitely poor. Occasionally, there were some who held swords but those were also chipped and rusted without any signs of proper maintenance.

But that big hatchet alone still held sharpness and was releasing a shine even an amateur could see.

What it released was not just shine but also a darkish aura similar to my black magical energy.

The moment I thought that a troublesome one appeared, the goblin with the hatchet suddenly attacked its companions beside him with its weapon. With a short death cry, the neck of that goblin fell, clearly as if butter had been sliced with a knife.

“Oioi, that really is a dangerous guy.”

Even goblins noticed the abnormality and stopped their charge to look towards him.

In that short moment, the goblins near it one by one fell under the attack of that big hatchet and had their heads cut off.

“Kuro, that’s a cursed weapon! It’s dangerous!”

“Cursed weapon?”

Now that I remember, during the Maneuvering experiments, there were strange weapons which raised strength or allowed the use of magic without actually learning them, just by holding that weapon. Similar to how I used blackening on weapons, I thought weapons could also be attached with various magical effects.

But, there may be times when the magic attached may not always be a merit for the user as well. That must be the so called [Cursed Weapon].

Attacking all without discrimination of ally or enemy, it's quite a simple to understand curse.

As I somewhat carelessly thought, I shot my Rifle towards the Goblin still swinging around that hatchet.

I had stopped Gatling, so the aim was perfect, and pierced through the head brilliantly, or that was how it was supposed to be.

“guaau!!”

With a slight swing, the bullet was deflected by the hatchet.

“Are you kidding me? What kind of reaction speed is that!?”

With its eyes completely gone white, the already ugly face became worse and turned to look towards me.

Ah, this is, it's completely aiming for me now.

On top of it, its breathing became wilder than the time it appeared, it's drooling continuously, and its white eyes are now starting to become bloodshot. Did my single shot irritate it that much; the goblin's anger was clearly heating up.

This might be a little troublesome opponent.....

Chapter 14 - Goblin Extermination (2)

“Kurono!”

“Lily, it’s dangerous so get back a little.”

Goblins were already an agile race like monkeys but that one jumped threateningly towards me surpassing it.

“Rifle!”

I rapid-fired my Rifle towards the goblin in the air but with unnatural movements it deflected most of them with that big hatchet.

Even though some hit its body, as if it didn’t feel pain, it kept on swinging the hatchet with unchanged speed.

This is the type that’ll keep on coming until I completely destroy it. The distance between me and the landed goblin was about 3 meters.

Now that it was in front of me, I could clearly sense an ominous energy what could only be described as the [curse].

“Automatic Fencing”

To block the approaching enemy I controlled the blackened sticks that were behind me. If my opponent was a normal weapon I could have blocked it with just these wooden sticks.

“gyoaaah!!!”

In front of the cursed hatched, they were easily split in two.

The 4 sticks were somehow able to attack the goblin but it didn’t seem like it was taking any damage. While it was fighting with the sticks, I fired Rifle towards it but with superhuman reactions it either deflected or evaded it. In 10 seconds it had cut the sticks apart and then rushed towards me in a straight line.

“Kuh, shield!!”

The deployed shield somehow prevented my head from being split apart like a bamboo.

Even my strongest shield that wouldn't crack with my own Anti-material attack was cut till halfway. This will definitely break in the next attack.

"Buckshot."

But, I'm not going to let that happen.

Taking my Buckshot at close range, the goblin was blown away. Many bullets should have pierced through him but maybe due to the weapon strengthening the body as well; it was still in good health.

In mid air, it fixed its posture like a cat, and the blood stained goblin lightly landed on the ground.

The moment it took a step towards me to try and cut me again, the pieces of the broken black stick started coiling around its leg.

"gii!?"

It must have thought that the sticks have become useless after being cut apart, but Automatic Fencing won't be stopped just by being split into 2 or 3 pieces.

It didn't really have any effect against Sariel, but against the goblin corrupted by the weapon, it was effective.

With its leg caught, the goblin fell face first but it still didn't let go of the weapon in its hand.

"Anti-material."

Up till now the goblin had been jumping around, but due to it falling, I could precisely aim this time. And in that position it was impossible to swing that hatchet either, even a cursed weapon could not ignore the structure of its body. The fired bullet pierced through its strengthened arm and blew it away completely. The hand along with the weapon fell to the ground.

"Rifle."

At the same moment, the Rifle fired hit directly at its forehead and blood and brains burst out.

"phew, man close-combat really is scary....."

Without a user, the cursed weapon could no longer show its effects.

Wait, it won't fly by itself and try cutting me right? Is what I thought, but the blackish aura coming from that hatchet seems to have finally calmed down.

"For the time being I should recover it."

I don't want to fight another goblin who picked it up and went mad again.

"Kurono stop! It's dangerous!"

Lily who was standing quietly behind me as I asked raised her voice when she saw me coming close to the hatchet. Well, I am trying to touch a cursed weapon, it's normal to try and stop me.

"aa, it'll probably be fine Lily.

I without any hesitation touched the handle, at that moment.

—hate—kill—love—die—

"ooh, well this is a nostalgic feeling....."

It was similar to thoughts being forcefully put in my mind as done by the ring of restraint. The thoughts of love and hate entered my mind giving me a chill.

"You're being noisy, be quiet!—Blackening!!"

Similar to when the goblin held it, blackish aura started to come out of the hatchet but my much darker magical energy overcame it.

AS I thought, this big hatchet has black magical energy inside of it similar to mine but the quantity inside me is far above it.

I don't know what kind of malice it possesses but against an overwhelming difference of magical energy, it won't be able to make me go mad and control me as the goblin. Basically, my compatibility with the hatchet was good.

"Ku, Kurono?"

"See, I told you it'll be fine."

Hahahaha while laughing I played and swung it around my hand like a pen.

I didn't have such technique in me but due to probably the effect of coming in contact with the weapon, I felt as if the weapon was like a part of me and use it with maximum skill.

"The curse?"

"Hmm, I can't hear the hateful voices anymore. But, Lily shouldn't touch it. The only reason I can is because my compatibility was high."

"Is that so?"

"Yes."

"I see."

With the cursed hatchet in my hand, after making sure that I showed no change in presence, Lily finally showed a smile. But, isn't this scene of us smiling like this while surrounded by a mountain of goblin corpses a bit too surreal?

"Oh I almost forgot! There were goblins remaining."

Before I realized, the goblins that hadn't lost their fighting spirit were slowly surrounding me.

It seems they have finally become a bit more vigilant, they have shifted their strategy to slowly close the distance while moving on all sides. I can easily fight without any problems but it'll be dangerous to let Lily also become surrounded along with me.

"Lily, quickly——"

Move back, as I tried to say that, I heard the sound of something flying towards us.

Shit, they fired a bow.

As I looked up, numerous arrows were coming down towards us as if raining.

Will I be able to deflect them all with buckshot? Even if not, then with the help of the hatchet I will be able to defend my own body mostly.

In any case, due to the shield being partially destroyed previously I won't be able to reconstruct the shield in time.

For now, I should hold Lily and protect her from---

"nn!!"

"Huh?"

The moment I thought of holding Lily who was standing on the ground, I realized she was already on my shoulder. Sticking both her hands towards the front, with a "nn" Lily sound closed her eyes and groaned.

"eeei!!!"

With Lily's cute shout, her faintly glittering white body started shining more strongly than ever.

"Uooh, too bright!?"

The next moment, numerous beams of light were released from Lily's hands.

"What? It's a beam!? Is that a beam!?"

The numerous beams of light released by Lily flew towards the incoming arrows while leaving a trail behind it. With a speed much faster than the arrows, one beam of Lily's light destroyed multiple arrows.

"Could it be that it's automatically tracking them?"

Moreover, the targets are arrows which are pretty fast too.

As I muttered that, the rain of arrows had been completely destroyed in mid-air. The light that had counter-attacked had also disappeared.

".....amazing."

It's a highly efficient magic that makes my Rifle or buckshot look like toys. Amazing, can fairies all use such level of magic? Then it makes sense that goblins won't be much of an opponent.

"ehehe"

Receiving my respectful gaze, Lily became shy while sitting on my shoulder. Her face is close, her cuteness is also 3 times greater!

“ha!”

I can't calm down just yet; I'm still in a battle. The goblins have come close enough to be able to slash at me after one step.

“I'll have to also show my cool part it seems.”

I gently lowered Lily back to the ground. Holding the hatchet in my right hand, I start loading in my left hand.

“Lily, I won't let the spear users come any closer but they might shoot the arrows again so can I leave that to you?”

I have no reason to doubt Lily's abilities any longer and at this point it would be better to cooperate as well.

“Leave it to me!”

While raising her thin eyebrows, Lily's face is filled with confidence.

“Alright! Then I leave it to you!!”

At the same time, I start running towards the goblins in front of me.

Since my basis for black magic was a gun, my usual strategy was to fight from long range but that doesn't mean that I cannot fight at close quarters.

To allow me to fight from long range at all times, those maneuvering experiments were not that easy. Well, fighting in close range with an opponent so much that my body was drenched with blood was still scary no matter though.

“——Buckshot!”

I deal with the goblins in front of me with buckshot. Each of them held spear, knife, and a rusted sword. First I pick up the rusted sword.

“Blackening——Automatic Fencing.”

I control the blackened sword and throw it. In the same way I did the same with the knife then the spear as well.

“Pierce through.”

The blackened 3 weapons turned around and launched towards the goblins approaching towards my back.

Meanwhile, without even turning around, I slash apart the 2 goblins that came at me from the front.

“oohh, what amazing sharpness!!”

The weapon in goblin’s hand, the leather armor, flesh and bone, all were cut apart without any resistance at all. This might even cut an iron plate like paper. Due to blackening, its power must have risen as well, but I have never seen any weapon with such an amazing cutting ability. Cursed weapons are pretty amazing!

“deyaa!”

I split apart the incoming goblins into two one by one with the big hatchet. I had absolutely no knowledge of using swords but due to my body strengthening and the technique knowledge of the hatchet itself, I became able of using the magnificent sword dance as done by the samurai shown in historical plays.

“dodon!!”

Behind me, along with this beautiful scene of carnage, a unexpected extremely cute scream could be heard. Probably, Lily just used magic. At the same time as the head of the goblin in front of me flew, the scene of the goblin archers deployed around the entrance of the cave being enveloped by a pillar of light came into my view. Seriously, Lily’s fairy magic is amazing. Will I also be someday become able to shoot beams?

“——You’re the last one!”

After splitting it from head to toe, the goblins around me had all been annihilated.

In my surroundings lay an innumerable amount of goblin corpses.

Every corpse lacked a hand, leg, head or some other part of the body. As such the amount blood was also amazing. The whole ground had turned into a hellish pool of blood and I myself was also drenched in blood as well.

The originally white clothes had already had already become blackish due to dirt. With the blood it had now become darkish brown, an even worse coloring than before.

Thinking that I matched with this place of massacre, my own thoughts may have become a bit twisted, but seeing Lily come towards even the current me with full of smiles, well I thought that it might not be that bad.

“Thanks for taking care of the archers for me.”

“I worked hard!”

“aa, it was one-shot kill too! Lily’s really amazing!”

“ehehe”

Lily seemed proud yet embaressed.

“Well then, it’s done more or less. There should be more of them inside the cave right? What should we do? Should we take care of it now as well?”

“No, it’s fine already.”

“Is that so?”

“Yup—“

And then, Lily shined for the third time today. The same pillar of light that purged the archers appeared near the entrance of the cave and just like that shot at the cliff itself.

I didn’t know how much power that pillar had but, the slope of the cliff exploded and started burying the entrance to the cave with a crash.

The goblins that had been inside the cave started coming out due to panic but were crushed by the falling rocks and buried there and then.

“.....waa.”

As the landslide stopped, the entrance to the cave had been blocked and the goblins that might have been there had been buried alive. With a single shot, the extermination was complete.

“Let’s go back, Kurono.”

I was in a bit of a daze but came back to my senses when Lily pulled my cuff.

“Ye, Yeah, that’s right, let’s go back.”

“Yup.”

Looking at that small back walking through the forest in a good mood, I swore in my heart to never ever anger Lily no matter what.



Chapter 15 - Cleansing of Heart and Body

Near Lily's hut, there was small stream that was extremely clear maybe due to the fact that came from the fountain of light.

Having become even dirtier after finishing the goblin extermination, I decided to directly come here.

Obviously I had no soap and only cold water was available for washing the clothes, but I felt as if I had washed both my mind and body and had become more refreshed than ever before.

Although, the clothes soaked in blood had no way of returning to same level of whiteness as before.

"During that time I had no way to wash it properly after all."

Even in the facility, I was allowed to wash my body somewhat.

Or rather, I was thrown into a room smaller than the stalls in a public toilet and was washed through water jet streams blowing out from the walls along with my clothes. It felt more like being thrown inside a washing machine. I actually did almost drown a few times as well.

So now I am satisfied with just being able to wash myself at my once pace with clean water.

But still, I'm currently completely nude in the middle of a forest. I feel like pervert.....it's fine, after all the fairy Lily is also always like that too.

Well, a fairy who looked like a cute little girl and a guy of over 180cm height, even if both are nude, it's completely different after all.

Well leaving that aside, now that I think about it, does this world even have proper baths? As I thought that I sat on a convenient rock and began to eat another apple.

"un, it's delicious."

The first thing I ate after escaping that facility is this fruit which I have nicknamed as apple. The water of the river was also delicious but this fresh sour yet sweet flavour having red fruit is on a completely different level.

Due to it being so delicious, it took me 5 fruits to realize that the taste was slightly different from a normal apple. The box I sneaked in was luckily filled with lots of these fruits so I had no need to be worried about the quantity either.

While inside the box, I would either sleep or eat these apples, and inside my mind I'll focus on developing my magic. One of the magic I developed was [gatling]. After that, I fell into a deep sleep due to which I have no memory of being unloaded at the port of Pandora continent and then being transported through the land. While crossing that cliff, the carriage must have unluckily dropped this box down the cliff.

Actually, even if that carriage was actually attacked by goblins or something it was of no concern to me anymore, so it's useless to think about it anymore as well.

"But it's good that I learnt how to use [Shadow space]."

After eating the apple, I throw the central part that was left. The remains disappeared after being sucked into the shadow extending from me.

[Shadow Space] was a magic that created a room/space inside my own shadow. Of course, I named it myself and I don't know what its official name was. While fighting with the other human experiments, I saw many of them use this. At first "He brought out a sword out of nowhere!?" was all I could think, but after seeing it many times I finally realized the true identity of that magic.

By using your own shadow as a door, weapons or items can be stored inside it. Without having a fundamental image, I worked hard to get that 4th dimensional pocket likeability. (T/N: Reference to Doraemon.)

As a result, with an [image of gathering black magical energy inside my own shadow], I was successful up to some extent in creating a space inside my shadow.

The space was of about 2 meter in radius but others have obviously been able to store bigger objects so it seems I am still at an elementary level.

When I master this magic, I really might be able to create a 4th dimensional pocket. Leaving that aside, without feeling any weight I can carry anything anywhere. Once the space is built (that took an insane amount of magic), no

magic is required for maintaining it. Open and closing the space does require a little amount of magic but still this is a very convenient magic.

Even now, 24 apples are still stored inside my shadow. Even if I give Lily half of it, there is still 12 of them for me.

And the biggest loot from the goblin extermination, the cursed hatchet, is also stored inside. A weapon with that much strength should be rare even in this world. I think I have been charmed by its cutting ability.

Ah, I'm not being charmed due to the effect of the curse of the weapon right?

Well whatever. I also have other knives, swords blackened and stored inside as well. It's not worth more than trash but even if rusted, they are at least actual weapons. The attack power would be more than wooden branches after all.

I don't really have anything else to keep anyway. Also, the remains of the apple that I threw inside are disintegrated by my magic and absorbed inside the shadow. This is also something I copied from another human experiment.

During battle, that guy caught my blackened sword with his magic and instantly disintegrated and absorbed it to add it to his own attack power.

At my current level, the disintegration and absorption process is slow. On top of it, my efficiency is so bad that the magical energy used in the process is more than the magical energy gained. It seems it is still impossible for me to absorb magic without any loss like that human experiment. If I could do that, I would have been able to absorb that rain of arrows, use blackening on it, and return fire with them instantly. In any case, it is still impossible for me.

But even if I am unable to use it in battle, it's convenient like this for throwing away trash. Even that guy wouldn't think of such an ecological use of this ability.

".....Sorry, for escaping alone."

I should stop this. I am not strong enough to take care of other's well being and neither do I have the time for it.

Just being able to defeat numerous goblins is not a strength I can be proud of.

People stronger than me, like that Sariel, must exist as well.

In the end, being able to run away by myself was the best I could do. I didn't even think of trying to save other experiments with me.

"It's about time I return back to Lily's place."

Stopping my useless thoughts, I left the stream thinking about whether my body and clothes could also be dried through magic.



Chapter 16 - First Friend

"I'm coming in."

"Please do!"

As I opened the door to the hut, Lily greeted me with a smile. With just that, I felt healed. But I'm currently wearing nothing but wet underpants; it's not the time to be lost in thoughts.

"Kurono, take this."

"Hm?"

Lily gave me a rectangular piece of soft cloth. Is this a towel?

"Is it fine to use it?"

"Yes."

"Thanks."

For now, with this I didn't have any need to wear those wet underpants till they dried. Wrapping the towel around my waist, I took off my pants and hung it beside the rest of my clothes on the branch of a tree outside. Drying my head with the towel, I thought.

"Well, first I should get some clothes from somewhere."

Lily doesn't wear anything, she won't know much about it anyway. If I go to the village where she sells the medicines, I should be able to get some clothes for myself.

"Say Lily, does the nearby village have any shops selling clothes? If there are, how many are there?"

"?"

She looks at me blankly. Was it too much to ask two questions at the same time?

"Well, I think the second hand shop was selling some."

"Huh what do they sell usually?"

“Well anything! I don’t know about clothes but they did have armour!”

“Even armour? Wow, they really do sell anything.”

I thought it might have been something like a convenience store, but this is a world where monsters are a daily occurrence. Weapons are more important here than in my world. Even villages have shops dealing in them it seems.

“Kuroono, come in!”

“ah, it’s weird to talk while standing at the entrance after all. Then I’ll accept your offer and come in.”

Well this is a western style house so there is no space for removing shoes before entering the house. I have never gone abroad, but never did I think that my first experience of moving with shoes in someone’s house would be in a different world.

Just in case, I wiped the dirt off my feet and then stepped inside. Lily is also walking inside the house with bare feet.

For Lily who barely came up to my knee, this must feel like a huge house but for me who had grown into a uselessly big body, it still felt a bit cramped.

The house itself feels pretty big but, due to huge bookshelves lined beside each other along with boxes and mysterious sacks lying around, I felt a little oppressed.

The bed and the small table were the only things that made it feel that someone lived here. Even though only Lily lives here, there seem to be a lot of useless things. Although, it might be too much for her to remove those big bookshelves by herself.

“Come sit!”

As I was looking around the house, Lily called out to me.

Lily had jumped upon her bed and was patting the white mattress with both her hands. Since there seems to be no chairs, certainly that is the only place to sit.

As I sat down on the bed, I was instantly entranced by the fluffy sensation of the mattress. Since I had been sleeping on nothing but the hard floor up till now, this softness was an extreme luxury.

As I was immersed in that,

“I’ll go make some tea!”

I was about to ask her not to trouble herself, but as soon as her motivated glittering figure came into my view,

“Thanks.”

That was all I could say in the end.

I had already taken her towel. If I keep sitting here I feel that my debt towards Lily would keep on accelerating starting with that tea. Sorry Lily, at this time I only have my body and my black magic with me but one day I’ll return this favour to you tenfold! I promise!

As I strongly swore this inside my heart, I looked towards Lily.

“fuuuu!!”

Lily was breathing fire.

Are you a dragon!? I almost stood up and tsukkomi-ed. Calm down, it’s just magic.

As I said, Lily was currently blowing out fire towards the big kettle (?) from that small mouth of hers. There were many who could use fire type magic, but this is my first time seeing a humanoid person breathing fire literally. Is that also fairy magic?

I had many doubts, but looking at Lily working so hard just to make tea, I was unable to call out to her.

I’ll just quietly wait here---

“It’s done!!”

With that voice, I was pulled back to reality from the shallow sleep called thinking.

On the table stood Lily with a daunting pose, and beside her a teapot and cup giving off a sweet fragrance were lined up.

“oo, Thanks a lot!”

I was bit worried whether Lily who looked like a small child would be able to make tea properly, but it seems my worries were useless.

The cup was filled with Black tea? It should be something close to it going by its colour.

“Drink, Kurono!”

I received a gaze full of expectation from Lily—

“Ou, Itadakimasu—-“

As I reached towards the cup, I suddenly realized.

“Huh? Where’s Lily’s share?”

On the table, beside the cup, there was only the teapot. Did she forget about herself, the owner?

“There is only one.”

“Eh, what?”

“Cup.”

“Is that so? Why—-“

Could it be that she had no money? If that was so, I regretted that I ended up asking something so stupid.

“Because nobody ever comes. But Kurono came, for the first time ever. Lily is very happy.” (T/L: Lily talks in third person. Instead of ‘I’ she uses her own name.)

I regretted even more now. I see, so this is what it means to be expelled from the fountain of light.

If she lived in the village it wouldn’t have been like this, but since she is a fairy, she didn’t want to leave the forest either.

That is why, if she had not been expelled, then like a normal fairy, she could have had fun everyday with her friends. She would have been able to live without any sadness or pain—but this isn't what I'm supposed to say right now.

Accepting the fact that she was expelled and also living here rather than in the village, was both done by Lily herself. I have no right to deny it.

“That means I am the first friend to have ever been invited to your house? I'm honoured.”

“Friend?”

“Yeah. After all we fought against the goblin army together entrusting our backs to each other. We are already more than just some normal friends!”

That is why I will become the first person to give a helping hand to Lily who had always been alone till now. In this different world, I may be ignorant and lacking commonsense, I am not even that strong. Still I can at least fight monsters.

“Yeah, Lily is Kurono's friend!”

This day I saw Lily's best smile. But in this world full with nothing but my enemies, I was the one who was actually happier to have finally gotten my first friend.

That's right, just by meeting her, I felt glad to have come here.

Chapter 17 - Black Magician Kurono

The next day, I woke up at sunrise.

After coming to this different world, I woke up feeling refreshed for the first time. A bed is definitely a great thing. On the fluffy bed I lay completely naked except for the towel around my waist along with Lily who was nude from the very start.

Huh? Hearing up till this point, doesn't it sound like a suspicious situation?

It's alright. I didn't do anything to feel guilty about. That's because I am a gentleman. YES for Lolita but NO touching. I really am not a lolicon, seriously. Lily asked me to stay at the hut so I decided to accept her kind offer. Maybe because she was an extremely soft hearted person, Lily didn't seem to mind me completely depending on her.

Of course, I have no intention to only be on the receiving side. I have already resolved to return this favour definitely. But, is it fine to give so much to a man who has barely anything? What if I was just some parasitic bastard?

Oh no, am I getting conceited thinking I that must protect this angel, no, this fairy? It's fine. I am going to stay with Lily treating her with gratitude and honour.

"Well then, time to change into my clothes."

Without waking Lily who was still sleeping, I got of the bed and left the hut.

"un, it's a bit better I guess....."

Bur I can't say it's up to my expectations.

Although I knew while washing, the clothes that had become dark brownish colour due to dirt and blood, has become lighter but it's nowhere near its original whiteness.

Basically it's still dirty. It even has holes to top it off. If I went around wearing that in my previous world, I would have been reported instantly.

"It's not like I have any choice though....."

I had planned to go to the nearby village today, but I would at least need some clothes to get there.

Lily doesn't care whether I am in just under pants or just a towel, but that's an exception among exceptions.

The people of this world wear normal clothes. I saw that at the port town. As such, I will also have to wear at least something. Though, I feel that wearing nothing might be better than wearing this.

But no matter how much I complain the clothes won't get cleaner. Reluctantly, I wear the ragged robe-like clothes I had become used to wear.

"Now then, how should I get some clothes——"

While enjoying the gentle breeze blowing in the morning, I sat down on one of the boxes kept behind the hut and thought while taking Rodin's pose. (T/L: he is referencing Auguste Rodin who made the sculpture The Thinker. For more info <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thinker>)

As I sat and thought in an artistic pose,

"Ah, Kurono, Good Morning."

Lily came.

"Yeah, Good Morning."

I'll keep it a secret that I was almost about to say [good morning, princess].

"What are you doing sitting on the treasure box?"

"Treasure box?"

Wasn't this just another box?

Getting up, I examined the box closely. I see, it does have a keyhole.

"What's inside it?"

"Don't know."

As I saw Lily tilt her head in doubt, I became a bit excited inside.

“Doesn’t a mysterious treasure box sound interesting? On top of it, the owner was a magician. To think something like this would happen in reality, this really is a magic world!”

Everything in this, except for the few things of Lily, all belonged to the magician who had once lived here.

“Are you going to open it!?”

“Yeah, doesn’t it make you curious? Ah, is it bad to open it?”

“Open it!!”

Lily suddenly looked at me with a gaze full of expectations. Being looked at like that by Lily, I was suddenly filled with motivation.

“Alright! Leave it to me!”

Full of motivation, I faced the magical mysterious box.

No matter how you look at it, it’s made of wood. It would be easy to just destroy it but at times like these you should act smart. I think it should be better to destroy just the part with the keyhole.

“fuun!!”

So, I first try to open it with just physical strength. This box is like those that appear in RPGs, the ones that open upwards. As such, there isn’t any place to put my hands at but with my current strength——

“tsk!?”

The moment I put some strength, an electric current ran through the place I was touching. Reflexively, I pulled back my hand but the damage done is not very big.

“Trap, no, it seems to be protected by magic.”

“Kurono, are you alright?”

“Aah, it’s not strong enough to cause damage. But as expected of a magicians treasure box huh?”

If it is protected that strongly, means it contains a treasure better than I had imagined.

My 1st hope = lots of gold and silver. 2nd hope = strong magic item. 3rd hope = clothes (male size XL).

“Could it be a mimic?—” (T/L: reference to a D&D monster)

As I unintentionally muttered, I suddenly had a bad premonition.

“Say Lily, It won’t be containing some dangerous never to be released monster right?”

“It doesn’t contain any monster.”

“I’ll ask once more, its fine to open it, right?”

“Open it!!”

Again those sparkling eyes filled with expectations. I can’t leave this for later now. Well, even I didn’t feel like leaving it just because of getting a bit scared.

“If it’s protected by magic then I’ll use magic too—Blackening!”

Touching the box with both hands, I release the black magical energy at full strength.

Up till now I have only used it on weapons, cylindrical bars etc. but if blackening is successful, it will definitely cancel the electric shock like damage.

I can control without touching, throw it etc. with the help of blackening but I don’t know whether I’ll be able to do something like opening a lock since I have never controlled anything which had a ‘mechanism’ of a key lock.

“Alright, Blackening was successful—but I can’t manipulate the lock.”

I didn’t understand the structure of the lock or maybe the image is not sufficient, in any case I understood that I am unable to control the lock and open it.

“Then, I’ll have to directly tamper with it.”

Since the electrical trap was not there anymore, I could try using physical strength again but it doesn’t look like it’ll be successful since the box seems to be strengthened above normal.

So I'll use the only recovery (?) type magic I possess. The one which converts my black magical energy into jelly-like substance to close wounds.

Using the same thing, I'll pour magical energy inside the lock, harden it there, and then turn it.

I am not informed about the structure of a lock, but I can't just harden everything inside. I'll search for the responsive part while delicately controlling my magic—

"How does it look?"

Since I was clattering for a while, Lily asked anxiously.

"Yeah, a little bit more and—ohh!!"

I got a response! At the same time, with a *kachiri* sound, the box unlocked successfully.

"It opened!!"

Our voices perfectly overlapped, no well, in this situation it's kind of obvious to say the same thing.

"Alright! Open it Lily!"

"yeah!"

The two of us open it with feelings full of excitement.

"Th, this is!?"

Is what I say, but I couldn't exactly understand what it was at a single glance. That's because, it was just a black piece of cloth wrapping something up.

Well, I'm glad it's not a mimic at least.

"What is this?"

"I wonder."

For the time being, I pulled out the black cloth. It was a pretty thick and well made cloth, pretty big, and above all, a slight magical energy could be felt from it.

“This is.....Could it be that this is a magician’s robe!?”

As I spread it, I realized this is definitely a robe. And it’s completely black in colour. Even someone with no prior knowledge would come to the same conclusion that this was a magician’s robe.

“Kurono, try wearing it!”

“oh, is it fine, oh well I might as well wear it!”

It’s my long awaited proper clothes. On top of it, knowing that it’s a magician’s robe increased my tension as well.

As I wore it, the length was perfect as if it was measured in advance. And it felt excellent as well. Although it was quite thick, surprisingly it didn’t feel sultry. The magical energy wrapping the whole body was also comfortable probably because it was the same black magical energy.

“So? How does it look?”

“Yeah! It looks cool Kurono!”

“hahahaha this is embarrassing. But with this I could call myself a real magician now, right?”

I can’t fly with a broom, but I can definitely use real magic.

“Yeah! Kurono is a magician!”

“Is that so? Since Lily has said so, from now on I am a magician, no, a black magician!”

Maybe I got too caught up in the moment, but still, I decided to name myself as black magician from here onwards.

Chapter 18 – To Iruzu Village (1)

Inside the treasure box was one pair of knife and baton too. They seem to be the magician's favorite and are high-class quality.

I met an orthodox type of magician who wore a robe and swung the baton. I had also used Defensive Magic robe along with Magic enhancement and magic vanishing baton in a combat, due to it I can vaguely compare these now.

As a matter of course, when the battle ended I had to lose all of my equipment along with the mask. Setting aside the bitter memory, this robe gives a feeling of more fine quality than those ones, as for the baton, it seems like it was made for the use of black magic, even I could easily use it. The Knife is probably a Magical Weapon, I couldn't get a hang of whether it had skills or spells, there is a need to investigate it. The baton was most probably used by magician. It's not like anyone could use it, even within magicians. It seems to have a good compatibility with those who have a strong forte in Fire and Water.

Incidentally, I have black magic and saliel has white magic. The magical power changed it color to the attribute it used such as red for fire and blue for water. The magical power can use attributes such as 'fire', 'water', 'wind', 'lighting'. I have some information towards magic, though faint. Most probably, due to the effect of remodeling experiment, thanks to that, I understood it and adapted it fast.

I got off the point for a minute; when I touched the baton, I got a hunch and suddenly understood how to use it. It is as if this baton is my personal equipment, seems like it was prepared intentionally by someone. Maybe, the magician, this would mean he has the same magic power as me in other words a 'black magician'.

Anyhow now that I have an appearance in which I could go to village, I am really happy; my luck seems to be on the rise as of recently. But I still need to pay attention, just so the one thin underwear I have doesn't fall off or tear. It's my long awaited village debut and to get charged with obscene

appearance is totally out of question, therefore getting clothes is my first priority.

“Alright! Well then let’s go, you’re the guide Lili”

“Yeah!”

In the good hopes, we puffed our chests. Along with Lili as my guide we started to walk.

The place we were heading is known as ‘iruzu village’. After crossing a long and wide forest we got to the road. The road in front of us is fairly wide; therefore the village would also be in scale according to this. Yeah.

The “Pandora continent” has the civilization on the level of ‘middle ages’, therefore, even though there was a road, it’s not like it was made of asphalt or stones. It was made from soil. The road was pretty wide, that two carriages can pass easily; this might be the main road.

“Kwarl village is that way.”

“I see, villages were all connected to each through this road.”

The Iruzu village was the closest village to the hut in which Lili resided; it would take Lili one day to reach there even by flying. How did it look like, I won’t know unless I walk. Kwarl village is the second closest village.

“Do you think we would be able to reach the Iruzu village before noon?”

“Yeah”

There is no special reason to rush, let’s go slowly. I walked forward while holding Lili’s hands, and giving her a ride on my shoulder. Under the cloudless sky we, we walked on a single path.

“Come to think of it, there is no person passing here.”

It had already been 2 hours since we started walking on this road, but we haven’t come across any person. Is the travelling between villages not very popular? No, if it was modern era, there would’ve been cars and trains, but on the level of medieval age, maybe only travellers or merchant left the villages? If I live here, I will eventually understand. There is no use in thinking about it right now. While I was thinking about that, I finally discover a building in front.

“O~, finally the village, huh?”

I rush over there in high spirits; by the way lili was sitting on top of my shoulders. That building was a small house made of wood; one could obviously see the traces of a person living there. However, the scale of the house was funny.

“This is awfully small.”

It was a bungalow, which reminded me of the famous movie trilogy series “hobbit”. The house reached till the bottom of my throat; the roof was low, one could easily touch it.

“Kuro, here is the—”

As soon as Lili started to say, I felt a presence at a nearby, and I glared there. From the shadow of the cabin, came out a goblin with a sickle in one hand.

“Survivor from yesterday’s extermination?”

Judging from its clothes, it seemed different. It wore shabby and tattered clothes with matching top and bottom. But, a monster appearing in this place, perhaps the resident of this house was attacked. I was already in a battle ready mind, and as soon as I took a combat stance to shoot the

『Shotgun』 at any time. {TL: Any new name for it : 『散弾』 ? Can ya gimme?}

“What is it lad? You an acquaintance of Lili-san”

“What?”

This goblin strikes up a conversation in fluent Japanese. No, it was speaking the original language of the world, my head is arbitrarily understood it due to the effects of remodeling, but that isn’t the problem right now.

“Hello!”

“Yeah, Hello, It doesn’t seem like you came here today to sell medicines?”

“Yeah, today—”

Having a Chat conversation with a goblin, what the hell is happening? Why was there such a friendly atmosphere towards the one who was so much genocide yesterday? [TL: guys help me

ゴブリン相手に突然始まる世間話、一体なんなんだこれは、昨日あんなにジェノサイドった相手にどうしてこうもフレンドリーな接し方なんだ ?]

“Ah, umm, excuse me?”

For the time being it was not at all the atmosphere for fighting, I resolved and tried talking to him.

“Y-Yeah, now that I think about it, lad never seen here before. Well, if Lili-san has brought you, it doesn’t seem like you’re a bad person then.”

“I’m Kurono Mao. Nice to meet you.”

I don’t know why the heck I should give my regards to this goblin, but give my introduction in keigo (Polite form.)

“Y-yeah, I’m known as Wats, nice to meet you too. By the way lad you have a surname, are you an aristocrat or something?”

“Aristocrat?”

“You see, Kurono is a magician!”

“Ah, now that you say it, he does have an appearance of one”

“You see, Yesterday he helped in goblin extermination.”

“Is dat true? They’ve been popping out recently, so I thought of going for a mountain hunt, but, you guys really saved me, thank ya~ .”

A goblin delighted by the extermination of goblin, just what sort of goblin is he. (TL: just took him to be male.)

“Hey, Lili is this person (?) Not a goblin?”

I was hesitating in asking the person in question directly, so I tried asking Lili in a whispering voice.

“He is a goblin?”

Lili nonchalantly replied in face that says ‘Why do you ask something like that.’

“Hey, lad, do you not know anything about monsters?”

“Wha-, Yeah, I would be glad if someone could explain it to me.”

“Ah, aah, in my eyes even the every goblin is different, but from the eyes of guys from different races, they don’t seem to be much different.”

“So even if you’re a goblin, you’re different from the guys during goblin extermination?”

“As expected of a magician, you catch up fast.”

This stupidly laughing goblin wats, does look the same like the guys I’ve been killing, but by talking to him normally, he does have a different

atmosphere than them. Even though, he looks like a goblin but it seems like his insides are a complete human like me.

“Does that mean you’re a resident of iruzu village?”

“Yeah, I am growing vegetables and medicinal plants here.”

So, is that why he had sickle in his hands? Due to his appearance, even if he just had cutlery in his hands, it will only look like a dangerous, yes, I will also get used to it?

“Is the iruzu village, a goblin village?”

“No~, Humans and therianthropes and many other races live there, lad, going to such place your first time?”

“That’s right, it’s my first time coming in this place, and I don’t know most of things.”

Yeah, I’m not lying at all.

“Is that so, yeah, the races living in this area are scattered, so, the villages with many races residing in it are common around here. I’ve never been to a place where a single race is living in a village. A person, who comes from such a place, would generally get surprised.”

Indeed, so there are multiracial and monoracial villages, I thought only humans would be the only ones to live in such organized forms, but it seems like monsters who can speak and have intelligence like Wats are given the same treatment as humans.

The monoracial villages are pretty much exclusive-ish, but the multiracial villages are common here so there is a chance of them accepting me to their village. Wats is talking to us in a friendly manner; I think it is because I was accompanying Lili.

“Well, all the people are nice guys there, you’ll soon get used to it, and there are also humans like you. Keep going forward on the path; you’ll get to the middle of the village. And you’re even accompanying Lili-san; they’ll let you get in easily.”

“Is that so, thank you very much.”

I would like to ask many things right now, but it feels bad to stop him here. I will ask someone else.

“Ye-ah, thanks in advance for the medicine.”

“Yeah, Bye~ Bye~”

And after bidding farewell to Wats, who is also the first villager. We headed towards the middle of village.



Chapter 19 – To iruzu Village (2)

After a while, we saw fence of 2 meters spreading in both direction in front of us. It covered the whole village, in the same way as in the port city, though the trees, fence and houses were relatively small.

Still not all the buildings were inside the fence, including the house of the goblin wats we met before. On the other side of the fence, probably is the center of village, probably.

According to Lily's story, at first there was no house outside of fence, but with time the population increased and the surface are of the village expanded which resulted in needing a new fence. However, the construction of new fence is still not complete.

“That is the main gate”

“Yup”

There was a gate made of wood in front of road, which was left open. Standing beside it, was the gatekeeper, having a tall figure of a person while holding spear in his hands.

“Oya~, isn't it lily-san?”

The gatekeeper was wearing the same equipment of light armor and long spear as the gatekeeper of port city. He had a head of skink lizard and was a male, with his body covered with bright blue scales.

Is he one of the ‘Lizard-man?’ guys everyone talks about?

“Hello!”

As expected, he is an acquaintance of Lily; they are even greeting each other.

“It’s the first time I’ve seen Lily-san to bring someone with her.”

“Hello, nice to meet you, I’m known as ‘Kurono the black magician’.”

It seems like having a surname is not common here, so I decided to add ‘the black magician’ along with my first name.

“Thanks for that, I’m Glintotz, just a humble gatekeeper. However, a magician, Lily-san really does have some unusual acquaintances.”

“I met Lily recently, but already became her friend.”

“Ehehe~”

Lily is blushing while sitting on my shoulders, seeing her glitter and blush at point blank range is somewhat radiant.

“Is that so, well becoming a friend with lily-san who is a fairy, it doesn’t seem like you’re a bad person. You want to go inside, right! You can pass through here.”

“Is it alright? To let us pass through here so easily.”

“For you to become good friends with a fairy is a proof that you’re a good person. The fairies never become emotionally attached to the bastards with bad nature or personality. As you know, the fairies can read your mind.”

“Wha-, Lily, can you read the mind?”

“?”

Lily had an expression saying 'What?', as if she didn't understand what I said.

"Lily, try to guess what I'm trying to think right now."

"Yup"

['To be honest, in my previous world, I was a literature club member who loved to write, considerably emotional light novels.']

"Nh~, I can't understand."

".....I See"

It appears like that she cannot recognize each and every word of my mind. No, maybe she is not reading my mind in the first place.

"Ahahaha, you guys seem to have a good relationship. Hey! You don't have to keep on standing in such a place, go in."

"Thank you very much"

Thus, we both reached inside the iruzu village.

As soon as I entered, I understood that iruzu village, compared to port city is on a small scale but is a peaceful and calm village. At the plaza located in the center of village, many people were gathering and eating the lunch.

As wats said, there really are many races which live together in this village. Just by looking at the plaza, there were races including humans, lizard-man, and goblin like the long-eared elves and dwarfs with fine beard and therianthropes of cat and dog.

Up until now, I recognized anything without the human form as enemy monster but after this scene, I somehow understand that their difference in form is just a trivial matter.

By the way 'elves' and 'dwarves' are the official name of races, according to Lily, but the words I heard and understood were being automatically translated due to remodeling, therefore, their true pronunciation might be different; but the other person easily understood what I mean to say, I don't need to worry about it

"Now then, the house of village chief is-?"

"Over there!"

I had decided from the start to first go to greet the village chief after arriving at village.

According to Lily's story, it wasn't unusual for an outsider to greet the chief after arriving at village. Therefore, a suspicious magician like me can also meet him without any prior appointment. If this was Japan, there is no chance to meet the governing leader, but to meet the chief like this feels like a RPG. No, maybe more like a general township shrine meeting. But, as one would expect, going to meet the king who rules over the country is not easy, it is as difficult as to meet the Prime Minister of Japan.

I'm thinking about asking the village chief various things about this world. It will be difficult to task for small Lily to give the detailed explanation of this world, so I can only investigate the adults, and chief might be able to tell me something.

But it would be much better if I'm not suspected for being suspicious.....

"There is no need to worry about it, huh?"

With my mind made up of taking the risk, we face towards and chief's house and walked.



Chapter 20 – Head of Irz Village

The head of the village, is an old-aged female elf known as Shione-san, my meeting with her was quickly allowed.

Sitting on the seat offered to me, I met her who was sitting across the table.

“Welcome to Irz village Kurono-san, as a friend of Lily-san, we all shall gladly welcome you here.”

“Thank you very much.”

Even here I was shown the extent of Lily’s reputation. Everyone is even using the ‘-san’ suffix. Seriously you’re amazing Lily-san!

It became clear that Lily was clearly known in this village and was trusted very much as well. Even if she had no friends back at home, I was happy that she was so gladly accepted by the villagers.

“I have something to discuss with you, could I have some of your time?”

“Yeah, Sure, I don’t mind at all.”

I worried about her job as the head but since she is listening with a smile then I’ll accept her offer. Talking all the time using polite speech is really difficult. I haven’t talked this way ever since the interview for the part time job, I was working in.

Still, as long as the other party is an adult, I need use polite speech otherwise, even things that should go smoothly would go bad. It’s necessary for smooth communication.

I’m trying my best here, so overlook it, if my formal speech sounds weird.

“Due to some circumstances, I left my faraway hometown and came to this land. During the trip I met with an accident and got stranded in this foreign land.”

“Oh my, I thought you were a travelling magician but it seems you have some complicated circumstances.”

“Yes, as to how I ended up here even I’m not very sure of it so I can’t explain in detail. I’m sure you might be curious but I’ll be happy if you don’t ask about it.”

“Is that so? Very well, then I shall not pry any further in this matter. Please continue your story.”

“Thank you.”

Not explaining the most important part was quite selfish of me but it seems that she is a person with great generosity. I really am thankful for that.

“I had absolutely no knowledge about this area but I met Lily by chance and ended up receiving many favours from her.”

“Kuronon was fallen inside the forest.”

“You had fainted inside the fairy garden? It must have been difficult for you.”

“No, I met Lily soon so I didn’t have to face any problems. Though, I was threatened by the fairies to not approach the fountain of light.”

“Oh so you even met with the fairies of the fountain? They didn’t play any pranks on you, right?”

It seems those who meet the fairies inside the forest get tricked and end up losing their food and items.

They really are outrageous creatures.

Since I didn't hold anything, they were more focused on the apples lying around me and so I was ignored by them except by the one that threatened me.

"——I stayed one night at Lily's house but I can't stay like that without doing anything. Also, I didn't have any money while coming here, so I won't be able to pay any charge, if there is one. And so, I first want to become able to live by myself but I lack common knowledge about the village and its surrounding as well. What jobs are available, where to live, I need to understand all these from you?"

"Of course I'll gladly do so. It must be difficult to be by yourself at such a young age. Taking in a single human boy is not a problem for this village."

"Ku, Kurono.....you'll live in Irz village?"

"If possible, yes. I can't live with Lily all the time after all."

"Why!? Stay with Lily! It's lonely!"

"Li, Lily....."

I never expected her to cling on me with tears!

Why? Did I say something bad!?

"Kurono-san, fairies don't say anything only due to politeness. If Lily-san is insisting so much then you should accept her offer in my opinion."

“Is it fine for me to live together with you, Lily? I’m pretty big so the small hut might feel cramped and I don’t know what kind of troubles I might cause.”

“It’s not cramped, its fine to give troubles! Lily wants to be with Kurono!!”

“Oh-, Yeah, Lily.....if you have go that far.....I can also stay with Lily!!”

“Really!? You’ll live together?”

“Yeah, if Lily so wishes, I live anywhere!”

“Kurono!”

“Lily!”

I tightly hugged Lily who jumped to my chest. Shit! She is way too cute!

“Aren’t you glad Kurono-san? It seems the problem of residence has been settled.”

“Yes, similar to the magician that once lived there, I’ll live in that hut with Lily.”

In an unexpected way, my housing problem was settled. It’s not like I didn’t think of living there but, I thought it might be too impudent of me to ask for it.....but, once again I’m thankful for Lily’s kindness.

“Oh? Were you aware of the magician that lived in the forest?”

“Yes, this robe was also inside the hut, so I believe it was also used by the magician.”

“Now that you say it, I thought it looked familiar. Yes, he also wore the same kind of robe.”

Ooh, so this really was the magicians robe. Or rather, as expected of an elf, she has met the magician when he was alive.

“The magician of the forest helped this village in a lot of ways. If Kurono-san is also a magician, then I’ll be happy if you could also help us with your magic.”

“That magician, how did he help?”

“Let’s see, putting up a barrier around the village, or compounding rare medicines to cure strong diseases, once he also prayed and made it rain as well.”

“Sorry, but all of them are impossible for me.....”

Damn those masked men! They didn’t teach me any other useful magic except for the combat ones! They really are the worst!

“It’s a bit embarrassing, but I can only exterminate monsters.”

“Kurono is very strong! He exterminated the goblins!”

Thanks Lily, for the great follow-up.

“Ara, is that so? Quite a lot of them were there so it might have taken time even if we did a mountain hunt. So Kurono-san exterminated them?”

“Lily was also a big help but yes, the goblins in the cave have been completely annihilated.”

“In just one day?”

“Yes, yesterday.”

“That’s amazing. If you are that strong then you could earn a lot as an adventurer.”

“Adventurer?”

“You don’t know? I was sure they existed in all countries.”

“Is it a job that exterminates monsters?”

“Yes, it also includes guarding the villages, escorting merchants, retrieving rare items from dangerous places; oh that’s right, for an adventurer their first and foremost job is to search for treasures in a dungeon.”

Did she just say du, dungeon!?

That facility was also very much like a dungeon but does this world really have a real dungeon with treasures sleeping inside it?!

Whoa! Somehow I can feel my tension rising!!

“I see, so there are dungeons. Can you please explain a bit more in detail?”

Calming the excitement in my heart, I pretend to be calm and ask.

“The closest from here would be Fairy Garden I believe.”

Eh, that forest is also treated as a dungeon!?

“But, even adventurers don’t approach the fountain of light, not because it’s dangerous, but because they don’t want to worsen the relationship with fairies. A dungeon that adventurers can explore around here would be the famous Media ruins in the Kuar village caves.”(shione)

So a cave dungeon is present near the Kuar village.....a historical ruin dungeon, damn I’m getting too excited.

“Um, can anyone become an adventurer?”

“Yes, there is no need to even have any identity proof either. As long as you can complete requests, anyone is fine.” We also have an Adventurer Guild here. If you are interested then please visit there.”

A guild is a place to collect and give requests to the adventurers.

It seems that the Adventurer’s Guild is a very big organization, so adventurers are welcome in every village or town. Also, a request received from the guild means that remuneration is certain. They also provide various other kinds of support facilities as well. Basically, an adventurer will definitely register there.

“Thank you, as an adventurer, even I who can do nothing but fight monsters will be able to earn there.”

“Good. I also frequently put up requests at the guild so I’ll be counting on you at that time.”

“Yes, I look forward to it.”

Well then, with the existence of the occupation known as Adventurer, my vision seems to have opened and expanded a bit more.

After asking some more things about the village, let's go to the Guild at once.



Chapter21 - Welcome to Adventurer Guild ! (1)

In an enthusiastic voice I said to go and register at adventurer guild but the smell of delicious food in the lobby of the adventurer guild caused the pits of my and Lily's stomach to start a duet.

"Let's have a meal!"

"Yeah!"

Thus, putting off the registration at adventurer guild, and I went ahead to eat my first outdoor meal.

As this place was within the adventurer guild, there were customers-cum-adventurers in all direction. Even a dangerous looking person with armor and weapon was sporadically watching here and there in the shop.

Right now, it would be much better to focus on one thing rather than to focus on the perfectly dangerous looking customer.

"Yeah, which one would be better?"

"Yeah, which one?"

Thanks to the mental remodelling, I can now understand not only the language, but also the written words, so I don't have to struggle to read the menu.

It seems like Lily has never been to this sort of place before, and was not very knowledgeable about the food here. So we both start racking our brains together.

Looks like the order system is normal here, after deciding the menu, you just have to request it from the shop assistant. Oh, now that I think about it,

what about the tip system?

“Excuse me, can I order?”

“Yes, yes, please go ahead.”

Saying such, a waitress with cat ears comes running, or perhaps I should say a cat was a waitress.

She was covered head to toe in a pattern of calico cat fur. Her face was also close to that of cat, but she walked on two legs and her head and body were almost same as a human. She was one of the races called the therianthropes.

Upon looking at her, she has a head with hair like that of a human, and her face also looks like a human, her brown hair are in a semi long hairstyle.

“Um——”

It is rude to keep staring at her, for now let's order.

And thus, I without a hitch, finish the order.

“The total is 520 silver.”

This place used a prepay system, so it will be charged up front. I abruptly take out a single gold coin from my pocket.

“I'm sorry, but at the moment I only have a gold coin, is it alright with you?”

“Nnya! 1 gold coin! It's alright.”

“Then with this please.”

I hand over coin which has size of a 500 Yen coin into the palm of the cat.

“Thank you for your patronage, your change is 9480 silver.”

Jingling with her pocket, she returns me 9 big silver coins, 4 small silver coins and then 8 copper coins looking exactly like a 10 yen coin.

“Please wait a little bit.”

The cat waitress goes back to the counter, in the same way she came. Phew, the order and payment went easily, thank god.

“At any rate we got a great amount of money. Well the penniless me is for now saved.”

As for why i had a first-class object like a gold coin with me, Shinoe-san gave me a small remuneration for the goblin extermination I did yesterday.

20 silver coins in total, if converted into Japanese yen, it will be worth 20 thousand Yen. Naturally, both me and lily didn't have any purse. I tossed the 20 silver coins in a shadow resembling a pocket. As a means of storage this is certainly reliable.

I was also informed about the money of the country from the village head.

I thought this place used the bartering system but was relieved to hear that this place used currency as the means for trade. If there is no money, you will have a hard time shopping.

Above all, I am still not accustomed to this place, the currency here are all weighing currencies. They are made of three materials gold,silver and copper.

Strictly speaking, there are no monetary units. For big amounts of money gold is used and for the small amount of money below 1 gold, silver is used.

The gold coin I had was 1 gold, in other words it was worth ten thousand Yen.

In the change I got, the big silver coin is worth a thousand Yen, the small silver coin is worth a hundred Yen and the copper coin is ten Yen.

One gold to ten thousand silver is the exchange the rate used here. The silver represents approximately the same value as the Japanese Yen. Copper coins can be used for units below ten Yen, as for the small silver, it has two varieties of it which are of equivalent value and it seems like the silver coin used in the Edo era.

In the guild, copper coin is used. I was also told about the price of commodities to some extent, but as expected unless i do shopping myself I won't know the actual market price.

The prices of the guild food seem to be common in all guilds, thus it becomes the criterion for the price of food or so I heard.

The lunch for two people totals to 520 silver if not 520 Yen. The price of commodities seem to very cheap compared to Japan. At least, in relation with food, the price is around the half of normal food in Japan.

Incidentally, 200,000 yen or 20 Gold is a sum greater than one month's income of a single farmer living in Irz.

And I was suddenly given that large amount of money. I can play with it for a whole month without having a problem. If that scale of goblin extermination was handled by the guild and was carried out by all the villagers, then 20 gold is a very small amount of money.

In the guild, if both parties are to get the profit, the negotiations would be settled. On top of that, the evidence of the goblin extermination completion

is all up to Lily's testimony, it seems like the fairies don't have the ability to lie, and a fairy's testimony has a great value. Of course, it also includes the fact that the people trust Lily.

While I was thinking that, the food is served. In front of the hot and piping food, I lose all the feeling to think any more about troublesome money. [In front of the hot and piping food, I lose the desire to think any more about troublesome money.]

While both Lily and I say "Itadakimasu" we both take a bite of the food. That's right, the tradition of saying "Itadakimasu" and "Gochisousama" are common in both Japan and Pandora.

"Delish! This this 'Doltos' named meat is really good."

"Delicious!"

I eat up all this, dish made from unknown substance without hesitation. [I eat up all of the dish made from an unknown substance without hesitation.]

After eating everything, and drinking a tea made from unknown tea leaves, I take large breath.

"Fu~, It was really great——"

Lily's tea looks like a black tea and mine looks like a barley tea, both are really different, but the impression they give is decent. I'll do the registration in the adventurer guild after I become more calm.

"That's right, Lily, when we return home today, you'll have to listen to my story."

"Kurono's story?"

“I deceived the village head by saying I came here by getting caught in a accident, but I want Lily to know the truth.”

“Is that so? Yeah, I’ll listen!”

“Thank you Lily, it also seems like I will be accompanying you for a long time. Now then, I’ll go for the adventurer guild registration.”

“Yeah! Have a good trip!”

I was seen off by Lily with a smiling face, as I stood up from the seat.



Chapter 22 - Welcome to Adventurer Guild ! (2)

When i reach the reception, sitting there was

“Ah, the waitress from before.”

“Ah, the customer from before.”

The waitress with calico cat fur is the receptionist, is it because there is few staff?

“Are you looking for a request?”

“No, I was thinking of registering as an adventurer.”

“I see, so you are a rookie!”

“Yes, I’m a full fledged novice, I’ll be in your care from now on.”

“.....You’re a very well mannered person.”

“Is that so?”

“That’s right, the only person who talks to an underling staff person like me in formal speech is the village head. It is even more rare when there are already many rude adventurers.”

Now that i think about it, the village head even treated a mysterious youngster like me with kindness. That person speaks in polite speech to everyone?

Are all the adventurers rude, and rough just as they look? For the time being I look in the lobby and see the the adventurer groups sitting there and

talking about something. They do look big and brawny. Even I who had a tall height and scary face in my high school will look normal in between them.

“And so—, which reminds me I haven’t told you my name yet. I’m Nyareko.”

“Nyanko.?” [TL: He is giving her a cat name. Well it’s better that her real name]

“It’s Nyareko! You are also rude!”

“Eeh, Sorry, umm, Nyan.....not that, Nyareko-san. My name is Kurono.”

Looks like calling her like a cat is rude, I once again gain a new piece of common knowledge.

“Yes, yes, Kurono-san it is. Ah, you don’t have to speak to me in polite speech, it’s exhausting right?”

“Huh, you can tell?”

“I can tell~. But, using the right polite speech according to the other party, means you must have been educated a lot. Kurono-san which school did you go to?”

“Ahaha, it will save me a lot of trouble if you don’t ask me regarding my situation.”

“I see, you have special circumstances.”

“That’s right.”

“I understand, if it’s like that then I and also the guild won’t investigate any further. Well then, please fill in the admission form.”

A flat paper and pen is presented before me.

“Ah, If you cannot write the characters, i can write it on your behalf for 200 silver.”

Indeed, a school education is not common here, therefore the literacy rate is also low, and so the service of writing on someone else’s behalf is common.

Fortunately, the current me doesn’t need it.

“No, it’s alright.”

I have never written the strange characters of this world which look like the alphabet, but now it is already existing inside my head as an information, and writing it is possible.

However, it’s not like I can write it fast. While remembering and writing the pace will become slow.

‘This will need practice’ while thinking as such, I proceed to fill in the documents.

Well the only places for me to write are ‘name’, ‘age’, ‘gender’——

“What do you mean by ‘Class’?”

“Well, it is whether you are a swordsman or a magician. It is like the style in which you fight. If it is known, it can be used a reference for when you join a party, and your compatibility when fighting a monster. It is important information for making various judgements.”

“I see, well if it can be self-proclaimed, then——”

While remembering the characters and its way of writing, i start writing on the document with the pen.

“Black magician, is it?”

“Aa, the only name that comes to mind is this one. Are black magic users rare?”

“It is rare, black magic has many secrets in its history, and there is no user who is an adventurer.”

“Are there magicians, or more precisely sorcerers who use the fire or ice color magic more?”

“More- or rather, all the people who use color magic are mostly like them. The people who use ‘Summon’ magic or who specialise in ‘Heal’ magic also have at least one color magic.”

“Indeed, since I cannot handle any color magic, and most people don’t know the details of magic.”

“Yeah, if you go towards the city, you’ll find many places doing magic courses, but we only do the standard explanation for adventurers.”

Magic courses huh? If I get any chance, I’ll try to go. After all, it is better to understand the magic I’m using.

“Can I receive the standard explanation of adventurers right now?”

“Yes, I can explain the simple rules. If you want to hear anything else, you will have to apply for the beginner’s course.”

“Is that so, Ah, actually my companion is waiting for me, if the explanation will take a while, can we both take it together?”

“Your companion is Lily-san, right?”

“You know her? Lily really is famous.”

“There is no person that doesn’t know her here. She has been selling the valuables of fairies such their really effective medicine at really low prices for 30 years.”

“Whoa, Lily’s medicine is so aweso—, wait a bit, did you just say 30 years now?”

“That’s right, Lily-san is going to be 32 years old this year.”

“E.....EeEEEEEEEEE!?” [TL: Don’t cry my boy. i was also almost cried but due to laughter. Pfft Hahahaha.]

I involuntarily scream out. the stares of people in the surroundings pierce me saying ‘What’s going on over there?’. From the shock of hearing the truth. I didn’t care about their stares.

“32 years old!? Seriously!?”

“Yes, I’m serious.”

Up until now, I believed Lily was 5 or 6 years old and had no reason to doubt it, no, normally everyone would think that.

What is with this 32, huh?, that is, in other words, what the hell do you mean -dattebayo..... [TL: Naruto anyone?]

“You don’t have to be so surprised, the fairies live a lot longer and so they don’t change much.”

“I-, I see.....in other words, their mental age doesn’t change much from the time they are born?”

“Thats right, but fairies have good memorization capabilities, thus they know a lot of things. Especially Lily-san is different from the fairies of fountain. Lily-san came down to human habitation and she would remember most of things around here. She is also an acquaintance of Kwarl village’s head.”

“Is-Is that so.....”

I timidly turn back, and I catch the sight of Lily sitting on a chair in the lobby.

It seems she noticed me and waves her hand.

Tha-,that loveable being is of 32 years old..... It is really hard to believe this abrupt change..... No, this is a magical fantasy world, there might be things like this here.

“Well, it doesn’t matter how old she is, it doesn’t change the fact that she is Lily.”

“Ah, so will you take the beginner’s course along with Lily-san? By the way, the price of single person is 1000 silver, I won’t charge Lily-san.

[ED: Is she saying Lily is free? The way it is currently written makes it sound like she gets it cheaper, but he only pays 1000 total. I made three suggestions.]

[TL: Well let's let him only pay the money. It's a small price.]

"Please do so."

I take out 1 big silver coin from the pocket (to be precise from the shadow) and hand it to Nyareko-san.

"Yes, well then it will take time to prepare. Kurono-san you can wait in the lobby with Lily-san"

"I get it."

And so i return back to the seat, where the 32 years old Lily is waiting. I wonder if I'm worrying too much about her age...



Chapter 23 - Quest and Rank (1)

“Well then, newbie adventurers Kurono-san & Lily-san, I’ll be teaching you the fundamentals about the guild and adventurers!”(nyarko)

“Ah, Nyarko-san will be giving the lecture?”(kurono)

“hehe actually this is my first time doing this.”

“Is Nyarko-san a new employee in the guild?”

“That’s right! Though it hasn’t been even a full year since I started working, I am already the poster girl of the Irz Village adventurer guild!”

“Poster girl? Is that your self-proclaimed class?”

“I am the Poster girl in reality as well!! Kurono-san really is rude!?”

“Sorry, I got it. Nyarko-san is the guild’s poster cat-girl.”

“As long as you understand. Well, enough with the greetings, let’s start the lecture.”

We’ll be counting on you! – is what both I and Lily said but Lily is still making an expression that she doesn’t understand what’s going to start.

Well, I’m the one who is becoming an adventurer; Lily isn’t really concerned with it.

“Umm, then firstly.....umm.....let’s start with the rules & important points used by the guild!”(nyarko)

She just forgot, didn’t she?

“Ah, Kurono-san, will you be taking notes?”(nyarko)

“Thanks, that’ll help.”(kurono)

I was given a blank paper and pen similar to the one I used just now.

Considering their level civilisation, I thought they might use parchments but this is a clean sheet almost comparable with those in modern Japan.

I wonder if they have established the technology to process pulp or are they using some mysterious magic for this as well.

“Then first of all, regarding the request made to adventurers. Kurono-san knows that the guild is an organisation to provide various requests to the adventurers?”(nyarko)

“Yeah, I heard that from the village head.”(kurono)

“Then this’ll be fast. The guild accepts requests from big towns and villages as well as single individuals. The details and rewards of the quest introduced by the guild are usually trusted and correct. In case investigation of the quest details is insufficient or impossible, the same is written on the quest form as well. Then, it is upto the adventurer to decide whether he takes the quest or not. Again, there are times in case of emergencies where the guild will order compulsory quests to the adventurers.”

“What kind of compulsory quests?”

“The most common example would be rescue missions in case of calamities and times when a dragon or a similar level of disaster appears. That’s why they are also called emergency quests. Both are very rare cases so you don’t have to worry that much. By the way, in case you refuse an emergency quest then you’ll have to pay a cancellation charge as well. If you don’t pay it, then in worst case, you might be removed from the guild so please be careful.”

“What’ll happen if you are removed from a guild?”

“Of course you shall be unable to use the guild facilities. Also, if you take requests directly without the mediation of the guild then the chances of discrepancies in the quest details and reward amount will become much higher. Just by not being able to use the guild, you’ll become unable to work as an adventurer, so please abide by the rules.”

“I see. Is there any other way that might lead to removal from guild?”

“First, regarding the rewards. The guild takes 10% of the reward money from the client as commission. This amount is already deducted from the amount shown on the request form. The guild takes full responsibility for the requests introduced by them, therefore in case the client suddenly went missing or died and trouble regarding the payment of reward appears, in no

case will the adventurer be left unrewarded so you can be relieved. But, in case of failing the quest, or becoming unable to continue it, a cancellation charge as per the situation or the money required to transfer the quest to another adventurer will be taken from you so please understand.”

“As long as the adventurer completes the quest, reward is certain but in case of failure, a charge to be paid may appear so don’t complain at that time, right?”

“Exactly, it is quite a basic thing but still in every guild there is adventurer who is stuck with a claim. Kurono-san looks intelligent so there isn’t worry of that though.”

“Complimenting me won’t get you anything.”

“Not at all. There are very few who understand everything uptill now. Unable to even do simple plus minus, there are over-emotional people as well after all. But I think that Kurono-san is the type that can properly use his head.”

“Well, I’ll at least not get stuck with a claim from the guild as long as there is a chance of getting removed and penalised.”

I was thought as someone educated just by my manners, in this world a common Japanese man should be considered as an over-educated person probably.

It’s not that I’m amazing but it’s the surrounding education standards that are poor. Well it can’t be helped since there is no system to make people go to school.

“Also, regarding the quests, I’ll explain about their ranks.”(Nyarko)

“Difficult or easy quest, or something like that?”

“Yes, your own adventurer rank as well as quest rank and also monster rank, all are compared to choose the most optimal quest. Even the guild doesn’t want to raise the failure percentage of quests due to some reckless adventurer taking on too difficult quests, so an adventurer cannot take on quests above his own rank.”

“How are ranks divided?”

“All ranks are divided into ranks 1-5, rank 1 being lowest and 5 the highest. Quest rank is decided as per the monster to be defeated or the danger of the dungeon. Adventurer rank starts at 1 and after the accomplishments and achievements are recognised, the rank will be raised. In special cases where knights or soldiers who have accomplishments in wars decide to become adventurers, they can take an examination to start directly from rank 3. Well, this can't be done in the Irz village though.”

“Then that means that I'll start at rank 1.”

5 grades is a pretty simple method for differentiating. There would quite a lot of differences even inside the same rank. So, they are also divided into first half and second half it seems.

Poorly classifying the numerous quests will be troublesome after all, it can't be helped though. Guessing the difficulty of the quest from the details given will also depend on the experience of the adventurer.

“That's all regarding quests. Also, please be careful to not get civilians injured, don't trespass private properties and avoid causing damage to their items and things. Just because you are on a quest doesn't mean that guild will take responsibility for your criminal actions. Also, the guild will not be concerned with disputes with other adventurer parties. You are responsible for your own actions”

“I see, basically act within common sense, right?”

“Yes, the guild doesn't restrict an adventurer's actions; the adventurer can complete the quest however he wants.”

“Got it. Then I'll like to see the rank 1 q

Chapter 24 - Quest and Rank (2)

Quest: Collection of Rixei grass

Reward: 5000 silvers per bag

Deadline: first week of the month of distant thunder (Enrai)

Client: Irz village Item shop shopkeeper Kisshu(T/N: キッシュ suggest a better name if you can think)

Details: Required to enter Fairy Garden and collect a prescribed amount of Rixei grass in bags. A party who brings more than 3 bags will receive one potion set compounded from Rixei grass as well.

Quest: Recruiting Escorts for Peddler group (From Kuar to Daidalos)

Reward: daily wage of 7500 silver + battle allowances

Deadline: 20th of the month of Early-summer breeze (Ryokufuu), departure on 22nd

Client: Peddler representative Morty

Details: Recruiting escorts for a group of peddlers from Kuar to Daidalos. Free three meals per day. It'll be a month long journey but the route is the north-west highway with almost no dangers.

Quest: Recruiting luggage carrier for [Irz Blader]

Reward: 3000 silver per day

Deadline: plan till the end of the month of early-summer breeze (Ryokufuu)

Client: Leader of [Irz Blader] – Nino

Details: We need a luggage carrier for the party. The quest is a level 2 monster extermination but we'll protect you properly so don't worry!

Quest: Night sentry at Irz Village

Reward: 4000 silver per day

Deadline: Recruiting till the month of new sun (Shinyou)

Client: Irz village vigilante corps leader Grint

Details: Recently goblin and raptor type monsters have been increasing. So we need to reinforce the night time security of the village. You can come whenever you are available and can take the reward for the day on that day as well.

“Hmm, there are some words that I can’t understand…….”(kuroono)

Turning the 10 page documents I read the various quests available.

The major details I can understand since I can understand the letters but I can’t understand many things like calendar or place names, names of monsters etc. I can’t decide quickly like this.

“Even if you can’t understand well, most of the rank 1 quests here can be completed without much trouble, there is barely any fighting involved after all.”(Nyarko)

“No, before that I need to understand the calendar and names of places; do you sell a calendar and a map?”

“mumu, to think that someone cultured like Kuroono-san doesn’t know the calendar, this is very unexpected. Could it be you’re a prince of a far away country!?”

“Aren’t you dreaming a bit too much?”

“Oops sorry. I wasn’t supposed to talk about this right? Um, both calendar and maps are sold at the item shop.”

“The shop of the one mentioned in the quests?”

“That’s right. Since it’s the only item shop in the village, all adventurers get their potions and other items from there.”

“The villagers also use it but the main customers are definitely the adventurers. If Kuroono-san is going to become an adventurer at the village then you’ll definitely have to go there someday. After leaving here take a right and you’ll soon see its board.”

“Okay, I’ll go there after this.”

“Also Kurono-san, this is a bit unrelated to adventurer job, but if you want to learn about the calendar, geography and the plants and animals as well as monsters around here, you can ask to see the books stored in the village head’s house. Kurono-san can read after all, and you also seem to have a good understanding ability as well as memory so there shouldn’t be any problem.”

“Yeah, I like reading as well as writing.”

“Eh, Kurono-san is a writer!?”

“Ah, no.....as a hobby.....”

Shit, if she asks what type of books I write I’ll be in trouble.

“oops, this will also come under over-inquiry, I won’t ask anything else.”

“Thanks.”

It seems she thinks that there might be some secret since I was hesitating right now, but let’s just let her think that way. It’ll be easier for me as well.

She probably won’t understand even if I told her about a supernatural battle-story set in modern Japan after all. And there is also a chance of me being treated as a mentally ill guy as well.

“Anyway, can anyone freely read in the library at village head’s house?”

“It’s not something as amazing as a library but if you talk about a place where books are kept then it’s either there or here (guild) only.”

I see, collection of books isn’t common in houses even in modern Japan as well after all.

“Is that so? Then I’ll try going there tomorrow.”

For the time being I should be able to learn a lot about this world from those books.

“Well then Kurono-san, will you be accepting any quests?”

“No, I need to gather information and make some preparations so I won’t be taking any today.”

“Very well. Other than quests, we also reward for collecting raw materials and killing monsters as a freelance as well so please make use of that too. The details about it are put up on the bulletin board there. The sale price of materials and rewards on subjugating monsters changes with season so please keep on checking regularly. Ah, by the way, the current recommendation is goblin subjugation! It seems a big group has settled near here so the price is quite high right now. Soon an extermination quest might appear as well.”

“Are you talking about the ones living in the cave west of Fairy Garden?”

“You are well aware; did you hear it from Lily-san? But even if you are with Lily-san please be careful, if you get to close them they’ll attack in large numbers. In case of goblin extermination, it is advised to split them in small groups and attack them!”

“Sorry but the goblins there have already been already annihilated.”

“Eh?”

“Yesterday, I and Lily exterminated them.”

“Eeeh!? Really!?”

“Yes, I also received the reward from the Village head as well. The gold coin I paid during lunch was out of that. Well the fairies of the fountain had pushed the work on Lily so I just decided to do it and help her though.”

“Yesterday? In just one day?”

“Yeah, we attacked the cave directly and finished it up.”

“Ku, Kurono-san did?”

“More or less, though Lily destroyed the cave itself in the end so I might lose in terms of number defeated though.”

“No, No way.....just who are you Kurono-san?”

“You promised not to ask right? Well I did say that I am black magician.”

“I see.....right, it doesn’t matter who Kurono-san is as long as you can contribute to the village and the guild by completing quests. If you are

strong enough to single-handedly take on such a large group of goblins then all the more so! I look forward to working with you!"

"Same here."

"Umm, if you are that strong then was there any reason to even hear such an elementary level lecture? Also are you fine to be at rank 1?"

"That is, well, my knowledge is quite one-sided you see. I need to hear the rules at least. Although, there really isn't any meaning in hearing the methods to defeat goblins."

"I understand. If you have anything you need to know about the village or guild, please ask me."

"Thanks, I'll be counting on you."

"Also, umm"

"Hm?"

"Is Lily-san really that strong?"

On her question there was no change in Lily because,

"Ah, she fell asleep."

She was sleeping comfortably lying on my lap.

After eating so much and listening to such boring lecture she might have become sleepy after all. For the time being, she seems to be resistant to waking up so I'll let her sleep.

"Are the people of the village aware of Lily's strength? From her words, the village head was also aware that Lily had been constantly exterminating monsters."(Kurono)

"To protect the fountain of light it is said that she has been fighting the monsters in Fairy Garden for a long time now. It's a quite famous story. But, whenever I see her like that I just can't seem to believe it....."(Nyarko)

That overly innocent sleeping face. No matter how you look at it, it doesn't look like the face of someone who fights.

“No, well, even I thought the same thing at first. But, Lily is definitely strong. At least she can use stronger magic than me.”

The beams of light that repelled the rain of arrows and the pillar of light that smashed the cave, I don't think I can defend against either of them.

“Is, is that so? Amazing.”(Nyarko)

“Well, it doesn't sound believable until you see it for yourself.”

“Somehow, you guys are an amazing combination. This definitely raises my expectations! First-class adventurer might not be a dream!”

“Hm, well I don't really want to rise to such heights. I only became an adventurer to take care of my livelihood.”

In the first place, Lily isn't even an adventurer.

“Not at all. You will also start to aim for greater heights when you start completing quests.”

“Is that so?”

“Yes! That is what it means to be an adventurer!”

Without any basis, Nyarko-san proclaims this with confidence.

I can't really think of that but maybe I will also one day become an adventurer who pursues his dream and romance?

At least, as long as I am living with Lily, at least the future looks bright.

{T/N:the view changes to third person here}

Even in this world, there exist things that are a proof of a person's status.

If you are an adventurer, it is the certificate issued by the guild, i.e. the Guild card.

As long as you have it, you can get verified in any guild and receiving quests and rewards becomes smooth. It was a small dark grey plate made of metal. If Kurono saw it he might feel it's similar to [Dog tags].

“Ah, Nyarko, is that for the person in the black mantle who just came?”

“Yes, that’s right.”

The senior staff member of the Avian harpy race – Pine, looked at the guild card with interest.

“Black magician? Another weird one came it seems.”(Pine)

On the guild card, the name, rank and class is written.

“Yeah, he is a completely mysterious person!”(Nyarko)

“Well that isn’t really rare though. But he seems to be a companion of Lily-san so he shouldn’t be just some hoodlum or villain.”(Pine)

Since you can become an adventurer without giving any info about yourself, shady group of thieves and criminals also tend to gather here as well. Especially muscle-headed hoodlums and thugs who are proud of their strength.

Of course, adventurers aren’t just these guys but then again it’s also true that there are quite a lot of them like these guys.

“Kurono-san has a scary face but it seems he is properly educated. He seems to be skilled at magic as well. He might be some noble or the apprentice of a famous magician.”(Nyarko)

“fuun, skill at magic? Did you see his black magic?”(Pine)

“No but he exterminated the goblins who had appeared along with Lily-san. He also got rewarded by the Village head so he doesn’t seem to be lying as well.”

“Well looks like an amazing one has appeared.....this rookie has high expectations on him.”

“Yes! I’m excited as well!”

“But, this place doesn’t have many high ranked quests.”

“I know.”

But still, the presence of a strong adventurer in a village is always a good thing.

Although it costs money, they can take action quickly in case of monster attacks. They also exterminate monsters near the area as quests so the safety of the village is also guaranteed.

Other than that, if a variety of quests are properly completed, the client is able to perform his business smoothly.

“Now then, I’ll go and deliver the guild card.”

And thus, Kurono received the guild card and officially became a guild affiliated adventurer.



Chapter 25 - Irz Village Toolmaker

“Welcome”

I heard the voice of a man from inside the chaotic shop when I opened the door.

Sitting at the counter was a portly middle-aged man. It seems like he is the toolmaker ‘Kische’ of Irz village.

“Hello, I am a rookie adventurer who just finished the guild registration, and I’m here to purchase the necessary items.”

“Oh yes yes, we keep all things you’ll need in the store. My name is Kische and I hope you continue to favor my store with your patronage in the future.”

“Yes. I am called Kurono, I’ll be in your care.”

The shopkeeper shows a kindhearted smile. It seems that even in a different world the business-smile is a basic skill for a merchant.

“By the way Kurono-san, the thing you’re carrying on your shoulder is perhaps.....”

“Lily is having a little nap, I’d like us to speak as calmly as possible.”

Lily who completed the basic course as a sleeping tutorial, is still on a journey in dreamland, even after leaving the guild.

It couldn’t be helped, so I came over to the store carrying her on my back.

“If it’s okay with you, would you like to lay her on this chair?”

“Sorry, I appreciate it.”

With the owner’s kind permission I gently lay Lily on the couch. Lily is lighter than she appears, I wonder if it’s because she is a fairy. It will be inconvenient to move around the shop carrying her, and she seems to have bad dreams if I move around too much.

“Well, I was surprised. Do you and Lily know each other?”

As expected of Lily-san. She’s even famous here

Yes, we are friends, from now onwards I’ll be living with her.

“Is that so? Why are you livi—”

“There are various circumstances and I’d appreciate it if you didn’t pry too much.”

“However, I’m thinking of working as an adventurer in Irz for a while, so please take care of me from now on.”

“That is a grateful offer even to us, because supporting an adventurer is not only the work of the guild. So then, then you want to prepare to work as an adventurer, is that right?”

“Yes, but it’s my first time doing this and I don’t know what I will need to prepare. Can you assist me in choosing properly?”

I honestly ask for help without putting on airs. Even if I was made to buy too much there’s no way it would cost over 20 gold.

“Of course I can. But you see there is an adventurer set for rookies.”

“That..... sounds like a very convenient thing.”

“It is common for a lot of newcomers to miss what is important, so it would be much better to sell the necessary things in a set.”

“Oh, it sounds like there would be quite a demand for such a kit.”

“Nh? Kurono-san, to know a word like ‘demand’, are you a son of some shopkeeper? Your way of speaking is also very polit— Whoa, I did say I won’t pry into your affairs. From my side Kurono-san is an adventurer, and will be shopping at our shop, that’s the important thing, right?”

“Thank you.”

“I’ll go prepare your rookie set so please wait for a moment.”

It is called ‘adventurer set’, huh? Pretty straightforward item name it has, but for the current me it is a necessary thing, I honestly appreciate it. It seems I’ll be able to carry out my shopping smoothly.

“Yes, it is indeed 2 gold. Thank you for your purchase.”

The rookie set I bought, was the most expensive one.

It’s not like I am being taken advantage of, this set contains a tent for sleeping outdoors, so it was expensive. In the first place, it was a thing I didn’t have, and by adding various things to my purchase it came to this price.

The thing that impressed me most in this shopping was the recovery potion. I read about collecting the ingredients for a potion in a quest description, but seeing the real thing in front of me, it really is impressive.

The potions come as a liquid contained in a thin vial, much like what you'd see in an RPG. The liquid inside isn't a primary color like red or green, but rather it is a shade of greyish white. Potions are a liquid medicine, in addition to it, there are ointments for healing wounds too.

For external injuries like bleeding, the ointment is used and during a combat it might be much faster to close the wounds, compared to the potion.

In any case, I purchased a rookie set plus various things for 2 gold. It somehow makes me happy thinking this is now all my property.

"Kurono-san, that is quite a lot of luggage, are you sure you can carry it back?"

That reminds me, I don't have a bag let alone a horse drawn carriage. While holding some of the luggage with one arm I realise it is too much for one person, but luckily I'm a black mage!

"It's okay, it all goes in-"

The shadow extends from my feet and takes in the rookie set inside like a quagmire.

"This is... Well, I am surprised that you have learned spatial magic too."

Even though he knew I was a black magician from looking at my guild card, he is surprised because he thought a rookie wouldn't have such a level of skill? So this is called spatial magic.

For now I've learned it's unusual for someone to know this magic at a low rank.

“Kuronon you seem to have a lot of skill in magic. Come to think of it, do you have a weapon prepared?”

“A weapon, well, more or less.”

I have a large cursed hatchet.

“Is that so, for weapons there is a workshop for them on the outskirts of village. It’ll be good if you head there, they repair everything except magical weapons. They don’t specialise in canes or grimoires, but you can more or less see them in our workshop. They also appraise goods and weapons, if you find anything like that in a dungeon, by all means go there to have it appraised.”

“What do you mean by ‘appraisal’?”

“Did you know there is such a thing as a magical weapon?”

“Yes I’ve seen them several times and also used them here and there.”

“If you have some experience, then that’s good. Our appraiser can explain what sort of power the magical weapon has, how to use it and many other things.”

“The appraisal of the sharpness of the blade, or which skills or spells it has are outside their area of expertise, you can go to workshop if it’s okay with you.”

“I see... Can cursed weapons also be appraised?”

“Cu-,Cursed weapons is it ? It is dangerous and it cannot be appraised if we don’t know the curse. Well, we more or less can appraise it.”

“Is that so—”

I’m secretly excited while I take the cursed hatchet out of my shadow.

“Can you appraise this?”

I place the big hatched on the counter. It is solid black from the handle to the blade.

Is it my magic or the malice of the hatchet, a sinister aura starts flowing out from the blade.

“T-,This is... You also have such a ridiculous thing?”

The shopkeeper pulls his face back, maybe this is what happens when a normal person has a cursed weapon put in front of them. No, maybe because he is a tradesman, that he is only reacting this much..

“Kurono-san....., by any chance, did you dispel... No, you overwrote the curse with black magic?”

“It is called overwrite? I don’t know. So that I can use it, I wrapped it in black magic.”

“Is that so? You did a great job, it is suppressing almost all the malice of the curse, to ‘overwrite’ the process in itself is simple, but it consumes a large amount of magical power. Kurono-san you have a great talent.”

“Is that so, it is something I can’t know by myself. It’s just that, I think because my black magic has good compatibility with the curse that it can be done easily.”

“Splendid! Kurono-san you’re the very rare type which can use a cursed weapon, without making any changes in it. If it’s alright with you, I can sell the cursed weapons we have here on cheap prices to you.”

“Wha-, is that alright?”

“The cursed weapons are naturally difficult to use, but even storing them safely is a hassle. Unless there is an complete seal on the curse, the weapon can’t be used easily, even if it does have a seal if not taken care periodically, who knows what calamity may befall on the user. After all, they are accompanied by bad luck.”

“I see, but when used normally, it has a great power.”

“No matter how powerful it is, if you make a mistake in using it, you cannot come back to life after then. So how about it?”

“I’m really curious about it, but for today I’ll be going back.”

The sun is still up and shining, but if we leave the village during sunset, we will have to walk on the road in pitch black darkness.

“I see, so the appraisal results will be given tomorrow. Is that alright?”

“Okay, well then I’ll be coming tomorrow, it would be good if you can show me the cursed weapons. Ah, along with that I would like you to see my other weapons too.”

“Yes, please.”

I take out the small knife and the black baton out from my shadow. They were inside the treasure box along with the robe, I can’t understand how to

use the knife and I more or less understand the how to use the baton. There is no harm in having them appraised.

“The cost of appraisal per weapons is 2000 silver, is it alright with you?”

It seems like to appraise the weapons, a special practical magic is needed, along with the materials required for invocation of “Catalyst” magic. It seems like this price is not very expensive and is common here.

“Yes, please do so.”

“Certainly, then see you tomorrow.”

I entrust the weapon with the shopkeeper and leave the shop— then stopped walking.

I completely forgot it, the me right now is only wearing an underwear under the robe. I have the same level of equipments like the perverts that sometimes appear on the school route.

The thing most important to me is, neither the magic weapon nor items, but normal clothes.

“Excuse me, where can I buy the clothes and underwears.”

Without saying unnecessary things, I calmly ask the shopkeeper pretending to be wearing acceptable clothes.

“Yes, in that case—”

I gather the information about the most important shopping, and this time leave in the shop in a ‘cool way’. By the way Lily was still sleeping.

Chapter 26 – Story of a Normal High School Student

Kurono Mao was a 17 year old high school student.

He never dyed his hair, neither smoked nor quarreled, there was also no one in his surroundings who would do such things, he was living a truly peaceful high school life.

His family background was also normal, he had two parents and one older sister.

The only worries he had were the exams next year and the deadline for the literature club's anthology.

A regular and peaceful daily life, I had all of these things. [ET: Author changed from third person perspective to first person perspective]

“But, without understanding a thing, I was in a place I didn't know.”

The first time I opened my eyes in this world was in a laboratory where a ring was being installed into me.

Shit, even just by remembering it worsens my mood. For the rest of my life I doubt that I will ever face a morning wake up worse than that.

“The freedom of my body was stolen, and I became an experimental subject in the facility with only white rooms. As a result, I am now able to use black magic, my body has become a lot sturdier, I am able to understand the language of this world and am able to write and read the characters of this world as well.”

Though I did not ask for it, I was forcibly given this power.

The power I have right now cannot be gained without training in this world.

I got this power in less than one year, the compensation for it was the immense pain inflicted on my mind and body.

“After I gained power to some extent, I was forced to fight in what was called ‘mobility experiments’.”

It started off with an empty-handed light golem, and gradually the opponents kept becoming stronger.

Along with that, I also certainly got stronger.

“And once my opponent was.....a human from the same world as me, but I only discovered that after I had killed him.”

From then on, I completely relinquished my own will to them.

Nevertheless, the experiment was not going to stop, just, I started to feel I needed to escape from there.

Even though my sense of awareness was fading away, the experience I gained with my body became my own.

“Even after that, I was forced to fight in the same experiment. I can’t count how many people I had killed, but I was the one killed them. And each time I killed a person I gradually became stronger—let’s see, I gained the power which can defeat a fire breathing dragon.”

In those days, I had no time to regain my sense of awareness.

It was at that moment, when my sense of awareness and ego were about to disappear.

“I didn’t understand the circumstances in which it occurred, by the time I regained my sense of awareness, my ring was lying on the floor of the experiment room. Now that I think about it, the reason my sense of awareness was fading might be an effect of the ring. Anyway, the main source of restraining me the ‘ring’ was now removed. I killed all the masked men and escaped from the laboratory facility without hesitation.”

In the end, thanks to the power given to me by them, I was able to escape from the facility. After that, without eating or drinking anything I was able to reach here.

If it wasn’t for Sariel, escaping from the laboratory wouldn’t have been as dangerous.

“After escaping the facility, I thought of running to a place where they won’t come looking for me, and so I boarded a ship bound to the Pandora Continent. Then, when I woke up, Lily was there.”

I narrated the circumstances I had to Lily, who was sitting on top of my leg.

I don’t know the important things, such as how I came to this world and true identity of the masked men.

“Kurono.....”

“It’s alright now Lily, it was certainly painful, but it’s all past now.”

Even if Lily didn’t know everything in detail, she still understood the feelings I lived with inside the laboratory.

After such a long time, I don’t want words of consolation, I just wanted Lily to know about me.

Although, Lily being by my side was a sufficient amount of consolation for me.

“Hey Lily, do you know magic to summon a person from another world?”

“Another world? I don’t know, but there is summoning magic ‘summon’.”

“The one to call monsters?”

“Yeah.”

“Are most of the summoning magics like that?”

“Yeah, most can call out monsters or familiars. Other than that I don’t know.”

“I see.....”

I have seen monster or familiar summoning magic sometimes during the ‘mobility experiments’.

I wonder if I was also summoned from a big illuminated magic square like them.

However, the summoning magic Lily and I know are for calling someone from a different place in this world, not for calling someone from another world.

“Kurono, do you want to go home? When will you go back?”

“Aah, I want to go home. I left everything I have attained in my life entirely, when I came here——”

I wonder, what is happening right now in my previous world.

Am I being treated as a 'missing person' over there? Either way, there is no doubt that I've caused my family trouble.

At the very least, it will be much better if I could send a single letter.

"However, I don't know much about magic, and the outrageous magic for traversing between worlds will not be discovered easily. That's why, I will live here for a while, or else for my whole life in this world. Well, if it comes to that, I request you keep on having a everlasting friendship with me."

"Un! Lily will always live with Kurono!"

"Thanks, Lily."

I thought if I can live with Lily, then maybe living in this another world will also be interesting.

Chapter 27 – First Quest!

Quest: Collection of Rixei grass.

Reward: 5000 silver per bag.

Deadline: the first week of the month of Distant Thunder.

Client: Irz Village tool shop owner Kische.

Details: Required to enter the Fairy Garden and collect a prescribed amount of Rixei grass in bags. The party which brings more than three bags will receive one potion set compounded from Rixei grass.

“And so, here I am in the fairy garden!”

Wearing the clothes and carrying the items bought yesterday I have come to the location of my first quest.

Our current location is in front of Lily’s home.

“It doesn’t feel like an adventure.”

It can’t be helped because the herbs I need grow in the Fairy Garden.

I left the hut in the early morning, went to village, accepted the quest, and returned back. Truly a splendid double effort it is.

Well, I decided to take the quest knowing I had to take the trip. Alright then, lets go and collect the rixei grass.

“Yeah!”

The one who responded to my voice is of course my reliable buddy Lily.

For her to accompany with me on this quest, I completed her adventurer registration.

I thought of doing this while talking to her yesterday, well, let's put this talk aside.

And thus the rookie adventurer team of a human and a fairy pushed their way into the the Fairy Garden!

A few hours ago, I came to Irz village wasting two hours to accept a quest.

There is a reason I decided to accept the collection quest to "Harvest Rixei Grass" used to make potions.

The plant is also used by Lily to make her effective medicine, so getting paid to collect the raw material and also collect the raw material for the medicine was killing two birds with one stone.

It's different from the other quests because Lily and I can handle it easily on our own, and the Fairy Garden is also close to home.

I thought of this as an opportunity to become familiar with the geography of Fairy Garden, which also happens to be my neighborhood, and as for the quest to harvest the medicinal plant, we can easily look while walking.

"Where does the Rixei grass grow?"

"Umm....., over there!"

I leave guiding us completely in Lily's hands.

Well, it is good to have someone who knows the place, but it feels weird that I was doing nothing, just accompanying Lily.....If a monster appears I will fight it.

I walked following the steps of the fairy in a forest with various green trees, through which the sunlight shined on the ground..... it feels like a very much fantastical situation.

The forest has a relaxing effect, and it also makes the mood peaceful.

“At this rate, it feels like this quest will turn into a pleasant hiking trip.”

“There is something.....”

The mood that makes me feel like singing is blown away in an instant due to a suspicious presence.

Lily also seems to have noticed and she catches her breath.

However holding your breath is not going to stop you from being easily discovered with such a shining body.

There are various suspicious presences in our surroundings. I try to look out from the bushes and there was a monster.

“I have seen that dinosaur somewhere.”

In front of my eyes was a small dinosaur with sharp claws and was walking on two legs.

I say small, but it is taller than a person. It was obvious by looking at its heinous fangs which can bite a person's head like a fruit, that it is a carnivore.

It's appearance is just like a deinonychus I once saw in a book as a child.

[TL:<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deinonychus%5D>

"It's a dagger raptor."

"That's what it's called?"

"Yeah."

I remember seeing that name in the monster subjugation list at the guild. I see.....so it's this fellow.

If I am not mistaken it has the strength of rank 1, the same as a goblin. But individually, this guys strength is overwhelmingly superior.

Even within the same rank the difference in strength can be quite a lot.

The raptors in this world have dinosaur-istic names, have long claws and sharp fangs that remind me of knives and daggers. From what I see it looks like a dinosaur from my imagination.

The single dagger raptor has not sensed us yet, and restlessly moves his head right and left.

At first glance it appears full of openings...

"He's inviting us."

"Yup."

I have a body that fought desperately through many mobility experiments. Though I can't understand a monster's words I can understand their intentions. That experience through the hell was not just for show.

Lily has also noticed that this raptor is a decoy.

They are waiting for the moment our attention changes toward him, so the other raptors in the surroundings can start attacking.

But now that we know that much we have no intention to keep on glaring at it.

“Lily, you shoot at him. I’ll take care of the rest.”

“Understood.”

We leap out of bushes with Lily in front.

The raptor decoy immediately turns towards us taking and takes an offensive posture, but...

“Eeiii!”

Contrary to that cute shout, Lily’s laser beam pierces through the middle of the raptor’s forehead.

The raptor dies instantly in a flash without having the time to swing its claws.

Lily’s work is only till here, now the rest is—

“My turn!”

The moment we leapt out in offensive, the raptors hiding in the surroundings start to attack at once.

Two rush at me from my each side, one from my back, it might have thought about capturing me from behind, but if I know their moves, it's easy to exterminate them. I quickly turn around and raise the black baton in my hand.

"Buckshot."

The magic I supplied is amplified by the baton, due to it the bullets formed have more density than normal.

Firing buckshot only takes a moment, and the black curtain of bullets intercepts four raptors at once.

If I had fired the buckshot without the use of baton, it wouldn't have become a sure kill with one shot.

Although small, the raptors have the appearance of a dinosaur and were being protected by their hard scales and skins. They display incomparable defensive power when compared to goblins.

The bullets were higher power than normal, smashed the scales, and mercilessly drilled through the skin.

However due to using the baton I got from the magician's treasure box, officially named "Black Barista • Replica" my power has doubled. The bullets fired on my both sides at the same time, driving the raptors near the verge of death and eventually killing them.

There is one left, a single raptor now in front of me as I have turned back.

During the gap when I fired the bullets, it took the shortest distance and ran up to me. It is still trying to attack me with its claws but I'm out of their range.

“Pierce ‘Cursed Hatchet – “Tsuigiri” ’ .”

The black hatchet comes out from my shadow in an instant. I take it in my hands and dash out forward to finish the raptor.

Though a raptor has hard solid scales and skin, in front of this cursed hatchet, it gets split in two halves without any resistance.

The body of the raptor falls on the ground with a thud.

“Nh, the rest retreated, huh?”

When they saw their six friends go down in an instant, they concluded that they were no match for me and I felt the surrounding presences of raptors fade rapidly.

It won't be a problem to fight them, but I don't like to take the initiative and I won't pursue them.

In the first place our purpose for coming here was to harvest the medicinal herbs. If I fight with the monsters, there would be no end.

“Now then, we have already repelled them successfully, shall we move forward? Ah wait, let's take back the proof of killing them.”

I don't remember how much reward is given for a single raptor, but it might be able to reward me with gold.

The report of a suppression can be proved by taking a part of that particular monster as an identifier.

For a goblin the ears are popular and for the raptors it is the claws and fangs.

For proof you require a symmetrical pair of the large left and right claws or fangs.

I chose to collect the claws because they would be faster to cut off with the cursed hatchet.



Chapter 28 - Curse, Replica and Multipurpose Knife

A long, long time ago, a beautiful girl used to live in a small remote village.

The girl wasn't just beautiful, but also smart, knowledgeable in sciences, and also had talent in swordplay. And yet, she had a calm and gentle personality. Being the single daughter of the village head, she was loved by all. She was truly the very picture of an ideal girl.

The girl herself was satisfied with her life till now and held no dissatisfaction towards her betrothal with the strongest man in the village.

But, on the day the village was visited by a certain magic warrior, her fate had started to go out of order.

The youth had come to exterminate a strong monster that had started appearing near the village. The youth was just a newbie as a magic warrior but was filled with young enthusiasm and a sense of justice. That is why he took this request, which others felt was too dangerous as compared to the reward, as a mission for himself.

And thus the youth, along with the soldiers of the village, entered the mountains to exterminate the monster.

But this monster wasn't just strong but also cunning as well. And it commanded a swarm of small monsters and led a surprise attack on the youth and the soldiers.

Due to the surprise attack, the soldiers were scattered, and the small monsters obstructed the youth's chanting and made him unable to attack. He was somehow able to barely make it back to the village alive. He who returned with serious injuries was treated by the girl who had learnt about medicinal sciences. But, her heart was in a pitiful condition, the same as every other villager.

His wounds had healed but he had already lost the faith of the villagers.

But the youth did not give up.

The youth's abilities were weak but the sense of justice he held in his heart was the same as the magic warriors that appeared in fairy tales. It wouldn't break with just one loss.

Even though he received no help from the villagers, he once again left to face the monster and entered the mountain alone.

Of course, unable to fight against the strong monster that led a big swarm of monsters, he once again returned wounded. The girl once again healed the youth and the villagers once again scorned him.

But still, not giving up on defeating the monster and saving the village, he once again entered the mountain.

Lose again, healed by the girl again, challenge the monster again. This same cycle was repeated countless times.

The youth started getting stronger gradually with every battle and the number of small monsters was slowly yet steadily cutting down.

But still, the main boss remained undamaged and from the point of view of the villagers he was getting no success and their faith in him was yet to be restored. But the girl who healed him every time he returned injured started to get a better opinion of this magic warrior who was unable to give up.

Looking at that serious and earnest figure of the youth all the time, it did not take long for her feelings to grow deeper.

"Thank you as usual."

Thanking the girl who had healed him, he was about to yet again go and fight the monster, at that moment,

"Can you please take me as well?"

Swinging the big hatchet with one hand, the girl asked the youth.

Naturally, the boy refused.

But, the girl was obstinate in following him.

I want to help you who has been fighting for this village. I also want to fight for saving this village. I have confidence in my skills with the sword. I

brought the hatchet and not the sword so the village head will not find out.—etc etc. The girl kept on objecting the youth's words of refusal.

"You will take me as well, right?"

At last the youth yielded to the girl's strong enthusiasm. But, the girl was simply attracted to the youth and in actuality, she just wanted to help him in any way possible. The village was simply an afterthought.

Or maybe, the girl had become weird due to falling in love for the first time.

"Yes! This time the result was much better!"(youth)

Due to the girl joining, the fighting potential was greatly increased.

To release strong magic, chanting was necessary, so a swordsman or a soldier was necessary to protect the caster during that time.

After getting stronger due to the countless battles with the monsters alone, with the addition of just one swordsman, it was natural that he was able to display strength multiple times than usual.

Also, the girl was able to protect the youth perfectly while he was chanting.

Even though it was big, it was still a mere hatchet after all, yet she was able to slice the small monsters in a single slash. Her skills were definitely above those soldiers in the village.

The two of them, after that, entered the mountain together and clearly started driving the monsters into a corner.

"Today definitely, I'll end this——"

In the last battle, the swarm of monsters was almost annihilated, and even the boss monster was injured.

With his words, the youth made a firm resolution and together with the girl headed towards the last battle.

"I, I did it——"

After fighting for the whole day, the youth and the girl finally defeated the monster. The youth, after a long struggle, was happy to have finally saved

the village. But the girl was happy only due to the fact that the youth was happy.

By this time, the girl had become unable to think of anything else other than the youth to the extent where everything else seemed worthless. She was harbouring a twisted love in her heart.

Fighting with the youth together, without telling the villagers, it was the happiest moment for the girl in her whole life.

Returning to the village together, the youth let the villagers know that the monster had finally been defeated.

In the centre of the village with the village head, soldiers and others, the youth lifted and showed the head of the monster, and revealed that their fight like a heroic tale.

With a great applause, the villagers apologised to the youth for their impoliteness up till now and the village head gave his daughter's hand to the youth who had accomplished such a great feat—or so the girl stupidly thought by herself.

“I see, since you have defeated the monster we shall reward you. But it is unforgivable that you involved my daughter in such danger. I ask you to leave this village at once.” (Village head)

For a second, the girl was unable to understand her father's words.

From the point of view of the villagers, the youth was scorned beyond any recovery, and even if he finally defeated the monster and brought peace to the village, it was [too late now], or so they complained.

Even the village head felt that giving the reward was an extraordinary treatment towards the youth. And above all, not just the village head but even the villagers found it unforgivable that the youth involved their precious girl in such danger.

“No way——“

Why? Was what the girl was about to speak, but she was intelligent and soon realized the mind of the villagers. At the end, the girl just didn't want to believe it.

But the seeing the youth bowing deeply and apologising,

“Thank you up till now. Farewell”(youth)

And the moment these sad words reached her ears, the girl's world took a total turn. The village who was supposed to bless him and her, her village where she grew up, had hurt the youth's heart. They were an unforgivable enemy worse than monsters.

“I will not forgive——”(girl)

Firstly, she severed the head of her father. Then she split open the belly of the man who was supposed to be her fiancée and was speaking some useless things. At the end, each and every villager had the appearance of a ‘monster’ in her eyes.

“I will never forgive you!!!”

The big hatchet that had been enhanced by the youth's magic and had cut through countless monsters; had now become slightly covered in magical energy and showed strength far above a normal sword.

Using the now cursed hatchet, there was no one in the village who could stop the girl who was cutting everyone with a violent passion.

The girl slashed everyone that entered her view.

At the end all that was left was, the youth who had fallen and had become unable to move in front of the abrupt tragedy and the girl who was smiling while drenched in blood.

“Wh, Why did you…….”(youth)

Sitting on the ground, clenching his favourite staff, he asked the girl with a shivering voice.

“Why? Isn't it obvious——”(girl)

The girl answered with a mesmerizing and charming smile.

“Because I love you, that's why.”

And thus, the big hatchet filled with hate and love was born.

For the girl, the world to protect consisted of only the youth and herself and everything else was the enemy. Whether it be human or monster, there was

no distinction. Thus it held the curse of attacking everything indiscriminately.

“——this is the super dangerous story behind this big hatchet.”

The cursed weapon I got from those goblins. The appraisal result had come at the item shop, and I came to know about this overly blood-reeking old story of this different world which would have been better if I didn't know. Or rather, does an appraisal reveal the whole story behind how the weapon was born as well ?.....Magic really is amazing. By the way, its official name is [Cursed Hatchet – Tsujigiri (lit. intersecting beheading)]. If you let the blade absorb blood and enhance it further, it will change its name as well as its shape.

Seriously, it's a dangerous level up system. At least it could have been something softer like exp points, but instead it's -let the blade absorb blood.....

“And the black baton here is a replica version of a legendary weapon with hidden magic known as Black Barrister.”

The original is said to be able to fire an arrow made of black magic that could pierce through even castle walls. Though I don't know what it actually was like, but it should be similar to how I fire my magic bullets since I am able to bring out much more strength when using Rifle or Buckshot with this baton. SO this item must be compatible with me.

“The knife is called [Efreet's Thumb], it is meant to use fire type magic it seems.”

The item inside the treasure box along with the baton was knife with fire magic. Well that sounds good but the only type of fire magic I can use is.....

“umm, spewing small fire and putting up a flame barrier that can ward off small insects, and that's it.”

Even though I called it fire magic, it's just a replacement for a lighter or a bug-repellent.

Well it's practical but it still is a bit sad.

“Also, there is also a cursed weapon that I bought at the item shop, but, yeah, it's quite difficult to use in an actual battle.”

It would have been great if it was something straight like a sword but instead it's a [Needle]. I wonder if it can even be called a weapon.

Well, it was cheap so I ended up buying it in the end....

"nee,nee, Kurono."(Lily)

"Hm?"(kurono)

"What happened to the youth and the girl after that?"

Looks like Lily found that cruel tale interesting.

"Hm Let's see—the two of them lived together happily ever after."

After that, we were not attacked by any other monsters like that Dagger Raptor and safely reached the place where the Rixei grass grew.

"ooh, looks like a lot of it is growing. We should be easily able to fill the bags."

Rixei grass was so plain looking that you wouldn't even realize that it was there if I didn't particularly know about it.

The only characteristic was probably the jagged leaves like dandelions but other than that it was similar to weeds.

But, it cannot grow in any place other than Fairy Garden since it needed an environment with dense magical energy to grow.

Not just people or monsters but to think that magical energy affected even plants, for someone modern like me, it was very difficult to understand.

"Can this really be made into a medicine?"(kurono)

"It's not meant to be used directly though."(Lily)

"yeah, Nyarko-san also said something like that. Although I thought that the grass itself might also recover something like 10 HP."

"Echpii?"

I explained the concept of HP to Lily. Although it's called a medicinal plant, according to Nyarko-san, it won't show any effect until you properly boil it and process it into a proper medicine.

As Lily said, Rixei grass has no effect on the body if used directly. Even without studying about medicine professionally, it seems it is a widely known fact among even the rural people. But it seems there are younger people that think that any ingredients of the potion will have the same effect as well.

I was clearly in the latter category. I'm embarrassed.

"I'll learn from here onwards, so it's fine."

I cut the Rixei grass with the Efrete's knife from the roots. Obviously I don't release fire. What would I do if I caused a forest fire?

"To combine a knife and a lighter, this is basically like a multipurpose Swiss-knife."

I can't really feel the value of the fire magic, but it's still useful so I'll leave it at that.

"Now that I think about it, how is Lily removing the grass?"

Even I who has a magically reinforced body can do it faster since I have a knife. Lily using bare hands would definitely be inefficient, and she doesn't wear clothes so I'm pretty sure she doesn't have a sickle or a knife as well.

Curious, I looked towards Lily who looked like a kindergartener working very hard. The moment Lily held the roots of the grass in her hand, small lights flashed near her hand and the grass is completely separated and then Lily throws the grass inside the bag.

"Using laser to burn it off.....she is a scary child."

It was thanks to magic that she was able to do it so well. I should also work to find more applications for my magic!

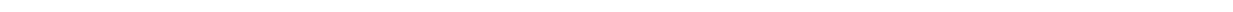
Looking at Lily's use of magic I resolved to raise my skill as a magician as well.

By the way, looking at the bag where Lily was putting all her grass and then looking at the [Shadow Space] made by me, I felt depressed again. I thought my space magic was unique.....

After this, we cleared the quest without any trouble.

Since we got exactly three bags, we received one set of Rixei grass extract 1000mg potion from the owner of the item shop.

But there is barely any danger in rank 1 quests so I don't really have any timing to try this potion. Well I'll keep it but doesn't this thing have any expiry date?



Chapter 29 - Return to Ordinary Life

A month had quickly passed after meeting Lily.

Even in this world the terms like a week, a month, and a year, is correct. Because even though the naming is different, this world also follows the same solar calendar as earth.

I met Lily during the first week of the [month of Ryokufuu (lit. Early-summer breeze)] which would correspond to April.

Right now it's May or [month of Enrai (lit. distant thunder)]. The second week will start from tomorrow.

Even in this calendar, the month of February [month of Hyoushou (lit. ice crystals)] is made up of 28 days and has 29 days in every 4 years.

Thanks to this, I was quickly able to learn the calendar. The day is also of the same length i.e around 24 hrs. Unfortunately, I don't have a watch so I can't be sure though.

Also, I learnt about the surroundings of the village as well. The village of Irz and other surrounding villages are agricultural villages with wheat production as the focus.

But in this world, a danger known as monsters exists so even the smallest of the villages have a pretty big population and they also have a wooden fence as a bare minimum defence.

So, people aren't spread all over the place in small groups. And thus the various villages are clearly marked and known even though it is like the middle ages here.

I also saw a rough map of the surrounding area at the village head's home so I now roughly know the locations of the neighbouring Kuar village, the forest of fairies, Kuar caves, Media ruins, and other mountains and rivers in the area.

The surroundings of the Irz village are located in a country that was recently raised by Gavinar of the dragon tribe. The capital Daidalos, that was also taken as the country name as well, is the territory where the dragon king resides.

Gavinar is apparently a young one even among the dragon tribe but holding strength and high ambitions, he became the king himself and built a country.

Aah, by the way, the Pandora continent is currently under attack by humans.

I did hear things like pioneering and colonisation at the port town, but it was true apparently. Also, the place where the facility was located is known as the Arc continent.

In my world, it's already recorded in history as to how those who crossed seas conquered the various countries. In Africa and India, the natives were subjected to slavery and ruled and were allowed to trade with their home country only.

In South America, the countries that had ruled from a long time like Inca and Aztecs were both destroyed and the people faced annihilation.

Then, will this Pandora continent also head towards slavery or annihilation some day? Well, it doesn't seem that way.

The colonisers in my world were able to do this because they held overwhelming difference in power. A simple logic even a child can understand, i.e. the strong shall rule the weak.

But the elves, dwarves, goblins, and other beastmen races possess strength enough to repel the invaders. In this magical world, guns are not the ultimate weapon; even a small dagger raptor could easily face gunfire. Of course, considering the weapons I saw in the facility, it seems guns haven't been even invented here.

Incidentally, during this one month, I have understood how much strength a normal human in this world possesses.

When I was escaping, I could kill those masked men and those in light armour in a single attack not because they were weak, but because that is the average strength of a normal human.

I don't think they can create an army of 10,000 or 100,000 of people with strength like that of Sarii.

I guess Sarii really was an exception. The humans in this world are basically similar to the ones in my world.

Although they may have magical energy, and army of humans does not have any advantage over a group of monsters. In fact, in individual strength, humans will lose.

And if they have Sariel, then there should be someone with the same level of strength on this side as well. An example would be the dragon king Gavinar who governs Daidalos.

The landing of the people from the Arc continent was unfortunately, no I should say fortunately, in front of Daidalos. As such, they had to face the fearsome army of Daidalos led by the dragon king. Due to this, they have been unable to continue their conquest further inside the Pandora continent.

The Daidalos army has currently completely trapped the people of the Arc continent and are threatening them to return back in the name of negotiating.

All this was heard from the village head, but considering what I had heard from the conversation in the port town, it's probably true that the conquest of Pandora continent is not going well.

It seems, I was pointlessly worried that I'll be dragged into a war. I'll be able to continue my peaceful life as adventurer here.

Once again, another normal day of my life in the different world began.

"Ah, Vats-san. Good Morning."(kuroono)

"Yo, good morning. Oh? Lily-san is not together with you today? That's rare."(Vats)

"She is going stay in the house and make medicines. I don't have anything to help there either."

"Is that so? She is usually together with you all the time so you must be lonely. But, I see, the day of selling medicines is coming closer."

"This time she'll be making more than usual so please come and get some. Though we'll charge for it."

"Ahhahha you're becoming more like a merchant."

"Well our livelihood depends on it after all."

“Aren’t you earning as an adventurer as well? I heard you were quite talented too.”

“No way, it’s just that my black magic is rare.”

“As long as you can exterminate monsters, anything’s fine. You’re going to the guild again today right? Work hard!”

“Yes, see you then.”

Greeting Vats-san early morning everyday while going to the village had also become something like a habit.

Even though I was surprised seeing a goblin like him at first.....it’s amazing how you can get used to things. The figure of Vats-san working in field along with his wife and children really looks just like a group of monsters from afar, but still they are splendid members of the Irz village.

“Grint-san, good morning.”

“Morning, huh, Lily-san is——“

I’m being asked that by everyone, well I certainly am usually seen with Lily. Explaining shortly, I go through the gate as usual.

“Oh right, many people have noticed Wind wolfs, so it looks like a pack of them has appeared.”

Wind wolfs are monsters like wolves that can use wind magic. They are the lowest rank 1 monsters that hunt in packs similar to dagger raptors but for the villagers they possess enough danger.

“I see. Then I’ll exterminate them if I see them.”(kuroono)

“Yeah, I’ll leave it to you.”(Grint)

Listening to the movement of monsters has also become a part of my life.

Grint-san is the leader of the vigilante corps of the village so it has become his duty to also be the gatekeeper as well.

Still, he is well aware of the information and news regarding the area from talking with other villagers; especially regarding monsters.

Although humans have been invading, the only direct danger to the village is from the monsters only.

“Good morning. What book are you going to look for today?”(shione)

Coming to the village head’s house for reading books has also become my daily routine.

Shione-san always receives me who keeps hanging in her library everyday pleasantly. No, seriously, thank you for giving me tea and stuff everyday.....

“Is there any book related to transfer or summoning magic or any info about ruins with ritual equipments of the same type?”(kurono)

“Though there are no grimoires, let’s see, there should be logs and records of adventurers who have gone into historic ruin type dungeons.”

“Then that please.”

I have obviously not given up returning to my own world.

But, I have no idea what I should do about it, so I can only research about summoning magic written in the books.

“Books specialising in magic or dungeons can only be found in the Daidalos library, I think.”(shione)

“So it really is like that. I’ll try travelling there someday.”(kurono)

Well its fine, no need to be impatient, I’ll solve this problem slowly.

Chapter 30 - Adventurer Party

Spend the morning reading at the village head's house, eat lunch at the guild in the afternoon, and then look for quests; is what my schedule on days I don't have any quest looks like.

"And then senpai said 'you do the rest'! And left all the work to me! Isn't it cruel!?"(Nyarko)

"I see, it's certainly cruel. So Nyarko can you please let me eat in peace?"(Kurono)

"Listen to me properly Kurono-san!!"

I think I have gotten quite close to this Guild's newbie employee Nyanko (T/N: kitty cat), no wait, Nyarko.

Even I have started calling her without any honorific. Nyarko uses polite speech as default since she is an employee but now she talks about work less and more idle talk. By the way, complaints are also included in idle talks.

As usual I am just a listener; once again she was barging my meal with her machine gun talk. How should I say this, don't you have some work?

"I'll be eating this, delicious!"(Nyarko)

"ah, oi!? Don't eat so much!"(kurono)

Two pieces of meat disappeared from my plate and in her mouth.

"It's fine, one or two bites .."

"Your one bite is too big! Look, the proportion of bread with the dish has been completely destroyed!"

"How rude.. You talk as if I eat too much——"

"Stop idling around, Nyarko!"(pine)

And with an angry shout, the one who was the subject of Nyarko's complaints, Pine-san appeared while raising her fists.

“Ouch!? Senpai you are so cruel— I was only trying to help a serious adventurer like Kurono-san who wanted to hear about jobs even during meals—“(nyarko)

“No, this was all one-sided from you.”(kurono)

“Wait Kurono-san!? You betrayed me!?”

“I don’t remember being your ally though?”

“Well then Kurono-san, I’ll have this girl return to troublesome filing of documents, so call me if you want to take on a quest.”(Pine)

“Got it. Bye Nyarko, work hard.”(kurono)

“guro-no-zaaann!! You’re heartlezz-!! (Nyarko)

With a pitiful cry resounding in the lobby, Pine-san dragged Nyarko away by her weakness that was her tail.

With this, my peaceful lunchtime returned again.

In the quiet lobby, I peacefully drank tea——

“Oi, you’re Kurono right?”

Suddenly, some random guy came and sat on the chair in front of me where Nyarko was sitting till now. Just when I thought I could finally eat calmly.....

“Yes, I am Kurono but——“

The person who sat in front of me was also a cat-human (werecat) like Nyarko.

Wearing light armour and a sword, he was clearly an adventurer. Behind him stood 3 people who were probably members of his party.

The werecat in front of me was a swordsman, a lizardman who had a spear, a harpy with a bow and a lamia with a long staff.

I could easily guess their races from their different bodies.

The werecat, similar to Nyarko, also had human-like hair on his head and also walked on two legs.

Lizardmen possessed more of their animal traits, so they had no hair and gave off a monster like feel.

Harpies have an upper body of a human and lower body of a bird. And the most special feature was that both their arms were wings but they still possessed hands as well.

Lamias have the upper body of a human and lower body of a snake. If not for the latter, they looked pretty much like normal humans. But, the long and narrow pupils and the tongue split at the end that appeared now and then gave off a more snake-like feeling.

I have never conversed with the people of this diverse party but, I have seen them a lot of times in the guild. I think their name was.....

“Rank 2 adventurer Party [Irz Blader] needs something from me?”(Kurono)

“Oh, so you know about us? Looks like we’ve become a bit famous.”(lamia)

“Stupid, don’t say useless things Aten!”(catguy)

The cat swordsman suddenly shouted at the lamia magic warrior.

“So, what business do you have with me?”(kurono)

It looked like they’ll start getting noisy among themselves, so I quickly asked their purpose.

“You, don’t hit on Nyarko-san while she is working! You’re bothering her!”(catguy)

“.....?”

For a second, I couldn’t understand what the hell he was talking about.

“That was Nyarko-san—”(kurono)

“Don’t give excuses-nya!!”(catguy)

Did he just shout with a ‘nyaa’ at me?

“It’s not an excuse. Besides saying that I was hitting on her is just groundless——”(kurono)

“Agh irritating. Stop talking in such a roundabout manner! Adventurers aren’t guys that talk in such a refined manner anyway!”

I was again faced with an amazing complaint.

But if he is saying to stop talking politely then fine

“Sure, this suits me better anyway. You may know my name, but I don’t know yours so how about you start with introducing yourselves first?”

Trying to act cool I might have been a bit too rude but I can’t treat adventurers similar to normal people. It’s necessary to show some attitude to not be underestimated by the other party.

“.....”(catguy)

“I am Aten, a fellow magic warrior. Nice to meet you.” (lamia/aten)

Ignoring the cat swordsman’s serious silence, the lamia girl quickly introduced herself.

“Aten!? Again you are doing things by yourself——”(catguy)

“It’s fine leader. At least tell your name. Rude guys aren’t popular.”(Aten)

“guh...”

“I am Harry.”

“My name is Claydor.”

After her, the Harpy and lizardman also named themselves respectively.

“.....I am Nino, leader of Irz Blader.”(catguy)

“Nice to meet you as well, you already know but I’m Kurono, a black magician who is also a new adventurer.”

A weird atmosphere hanged in the air.

I got their names, but I still don’t understand what they need from me.

“So, what were you saying about Nyarko?”(kurono)

“That’s right! You’re acting too familiar with her! And don’t call her without any honorific!!”

“If I had to say, it was Nyarko who is acting over familiar.”

“Like I said, stop making excuses——“

“What is it? Do like Nyarko or what?”

“Wha.....Why do you know that!?”

Ah, shit, I just said that randomly. Didn’t think it was actually correct. So that’s why he has been shouting Nyarko this and Nyarko that.....

Even the other members are making a ‘so it was obvious’ expression.

“Ah, well,.....sorry.”(kurono)

“Shut up!”

Having said that, he fell flat on the table.

“Anyway, I like human women so I have no intention to make a pass at Nyarko. You can be relieved.”(kurono)

“I knew it. We also said that a lot of times but this idiot just didn’t listen to us.”(Aten)

“Stop. Don’t say anymore than that.”

Nino who was still lying without any energy was somehow able to object Aten who had a teasing sadistic smile.

“Well leaving Nino aside, Kurono-san, could you cooperate with us?”

“Meaning? Aah, sit down first. No need to keep on standing.”(Kurono)

Harry asked with a serious face. So this was the main topic.

Anyway, I got to sit together with another adventurer party for the first time.

“You do know about the luggage carrying quest we have given out, right?”

“Aah, right, there was that quest as well. You want me to take that quest?”

“Basically, yes.”

“neee please Kurono～please carry our luggage～”(Aten)

“Aten, I’m trying to seriously trying to negotiate here. What’s with your asking style—”(harry)

“Alright.”(kurono)

“Eh?”

“I was also thinking of teaming up with another party. Also, I wanted to see how an actual party functions as well.”

“I see. Then please, we look forward to it.”

“Same here.”

I firmly shake hands with Harry. With this the contract is sealed.

“Wait, Kurono’s a human. Wouldn’t a beastman or an orc be a better choice?”(nino)

Finally revived, Nino interjected after all this time, but his logic wasn’t wrong.

No matter how much of a good body build I had, as a human my physical power would be lacking in comparison to other races. Of course, under the effect of the experiments, I could display beast-like strength even without magic but only Lily is aware of that.

“You don’t have to worry about that leader. Kurono-san can use spatial magic.” (harry)

“You’re well aware. Did you hear it from old man Kische?”(kurono)

“Yes.”

As expected, after all I used it frequently only in the item shop. Calling him old man, I think I have gotten quite unreserved with him now.

But still, that old man is definitely a sly fox, as expected of a merchant.

I’ll try selling him something like a suspicious item one day.

“Really?”(Nino)

Nino looked at me doubtfully. Does this guy hate me?

Maybe he still thinks I am a rival in love. Beastmen, whether for good or bad, have usually simple and straightforward personalities.

“Look at my feet——”(kurono)

At times like these, it's best to show directly.

From near my feet, Shadow space opened, and I randomly brought out a potion.

“”ooh!!””

The shadow swayed like water and the bottle of potion came out.

“I saw spatial magic for the first time～”(Aten)

Maybe because she was also a magic warrior, Aten's eyes were shining with curiosity and interest.

“How much can it hold?

Harry coolly questioned.

“Weight is irrelevant, as for size——enough to hold all of 5 you inside.”(kurono)

“That's amazing!”

“Convenient, right?”

Fufun, I boast a little.

Probably because she could also use it Lily wasn't that surprised. These reactions really make me happy.

“With this even leader can't complain right?”

“I wasn't really complaining in the first place, if he can do it then it's fine.”(nino)

“Well then, I'll go and take the quest then.”(kurono)

“Yes sure. We will wait here so we’ll explain the details afterwards.”

“Got it.”

Closing the shadow space, I left my seat and went towards the reception where Pine-san was.



Chapter 31 - Irz Blader and Luggage Carrying (1)

Quest rank 2: Dortoth hunting

Reward: 3-5 gold per head

Deadline: 1 month from the date of acceptance of quest

Client: Daidalos trader guild

Details: We request you to hunt Dortoths which are used for their fur and meat. We also deal and trade with ingredients all the year round so please hunt freely as much as you can.

“ooh, so this is the true identity of that mysterious meat.....”(kurono)
(T/N:reference to Ch 21)

That was the first thing that came in my mind regarding our quest.

Well, correctly speaking, my quest is to be a luggage carrier for Irz Blader and hunting for Dortoths is the quest for Irz Blader.

By the way, when monsters are killed for fur or meat, they call it ‘hunting’ and not ‘subjugation/extermination’.

Defeating the monster is not the priority; at the very least they also have to peel off the useable materials from the monster and at times they are even required to catch them alive or catch without wounding them etc., it can be very difficult at times.

The difficulty of hunting quests depends more on the details of the quest and less on the monster that has to be hunted.

By the way, the quests where the main requirement is to kill a monster are called as subjugation quests.

“Listen Kurono, although our objective is hunting Dortoths, we have been asked to hunt freely so we’ll also hunt Windwolfs that have been increasing lately. We are party that focuses on monster subjugation quests after all, since safety of the village was actually our original goal. But to function as an adventurer, money is required. So along with the required material we

will also need to gain money from defeating monsters as freelancing as well.”

This was the full explanation Nino had given me yesterday afternoon.

“We’ll leave the village at dawn tomorrow! That’s why stay at the village tonight!”

I was also suddenly told this.

Although I feel bad for Lily, this is also part of my work so I decided to send her a letter that I won’t be returning for around a week. Thank god the postal system exists even in the different world. Of course it isn’t at a level where they could deliver mails anywhere in the country at the same rate and with certainty, but there shouldn’t be a problem if it is to Lily’s house or the neighbouring village.

Aah, I am going to be lonely not being able to see Lily’s face for one whole week. I started feeling sentimental. Looks like I have become quite attached to her. I wonder if it’s the same for Lily.

No use thinking about it. I’ll bring lots of souvenirs while coming back. Deciding that, I slept in the lodge provided by the guild.

The dortohts live in a mountain region known as Gallahad. It was located west of the Fairy Garden, past the cave where the goblins had lived.

Even arriving there would take at least the whole day. Though, we might make it a bit faster since I put their entire luggage in shadow space.

Defeating the small monsters around the village and fairy garden is also one of the objectives but, before that the completion of quest had more priority. So we decided to directly go there first.

Since we didn’t enter the Fairy garden, our journey had rarely been interrupted by monsters.

It felt a bit like hiking. We talked to each other about ourselves.

For example, Harry was Pine-san’s younger brother and Claydor was Grint-san’s son.

Pine-san's face does look similar to Harry. Although I can't really find differences in the faces of lizardmen, Claydor also has blue scales like Grint-san. His spearmanship was also similar to his father.

After talking for some time, I more or less understood their personalities as well.

The leader Nino is a straightforward and frank type of person. But he's also the most talented among them and has also learnt [martial arts].

[Martial Arts] is a technique used by swordsmen and warriors who cannot use magic, to invoke magical energy inside their body to bring out special effects and abilities. It is something like a special move.

During the maneuvering experiments, I was hit by a thin sword that struck with an impossibly heavy blow, cut by a sword clad in flames, pierced by a spear clad in lightning, and experienced many other such martial arts.

Although both magic and martial arts use magical energy, they are differentiated clearly since they follow different set of rules.

Well regardless of what the actual theory behind it was, it is still an amazing skill that can display attack power or defensive power similar to Magic.

To have learnt multiple arts meant that you were a veteran in using weapons and fighting; on a completely different level from beginners.

But seeing him teased by Aten and remonstrated by Harry, I can't really call it amazing.....well looks like he is properly trusted by his comrades so it's OK.

Harry was, I had already guessed by his tone and atmosphere, the intellectual member of the party. He uses ' -san' honorific for everyone except the party members. Everything except battle has been left on to him.

He is the rearguard with a bow but since he is also meant to protect the magic user Aten, he is also able to fight with a short sword.

Claydor is a silent person, and usually doesn't participate in the conversation. Yeah, there are guys like him even in a different world. I had a friend like him so I somehow understood. In battle, he is the vanguard along with Nino. Possessing high defensive abilities due to his hard skin and scales, in emergencies, he can even protect his comrades with his body directly.

Aten is the lone woman in the group. But, it seems that people are only attracted to those of their own race, so even if it was someone as beautiful as her, only a lamia would be attracted to her. It seems there is no danger of internal disputes due to a love affair.

A magic user like her is the weakest on her own but with the support of the vanguards she can release wide ranged intermediate level attack magic. She is the attack pillar of the party.

She can also use healing magic somewhat, but she is not expert enough to use it while in battle. So recovery of the party relies on items.

Like this I basically got their personal data.

Rest I'll understand when I'll see them in actual battle.

"So what about Kurono?"

"What do you mean?"(kurono)

Aten suddenly asked about me.

"What magic you use, fighting style, things like that? We talked about ourselves but we haven't heard anything about you."(Aten)

"That's right. If you became an adventurer then you should have confidence in your skills right?"(Harry)

"Oh, well I have never compared myself with other adventurers so I can't really say but at least I'm not stronger at magic than Lily. I can't really chant and only depend on single action and defensive shield magic."

Single action refers to magic like [Rifle] or [buckshot].

Solidifying your own magical energy and shooting it out without utilising any other spell or technique. It is fired after a single process, thus it's called single action.

Which reminds me, my shield is also made in the same way so that will also come under single action.

Anyway, it's the basic among the basics for a magic user. If you can't use single action you cannot be called a magician.

“Eeh since you knew spatial magic, I was sure that you would know some amazing magic. Or rather, it’s amazing you decided to become an adventurer even though you could only use single action and shield.”(Aten)

Am I being looked at with a pitiful gaze right now?

It’s true that I can’t utilise complex chants and effects but I can still shoot bullets infinitely, small monsters won’t be any trouble for me.

“Kurono-san is still rank 1 after all and won’t be taking part in combat this time so there’s no need to worry. He’ll learn various magic from here onwards, why don’t you teach him something as well Aten?”

Huh? Could it be that I’m being treated as a super beginner right now?

Well whatever. My job isn’t fighting right now so there is no need to uselessly open my mouth.

“I don’t know anything about black magic though?”(Aten)

“No, well, I never learned magic from an actual magic user so it would be fine if you could just teach me the basics.”(kurono)

That’s actually true.

Lily is also amazing at magic, but it’s a type of race specific magic that can be used from the time they are born which is known as Extra.

If I had to say, it is something similar to how dragons breathe fire. Even if someone of another race wants to learn, it is impossible on the structural level.

So, I had basically no idea what was the thing known as magic that existed in this world.

Chants or rituals, they are all unknown things to me.

“Is that so? But my guidance will be strict you know?”(Aten)

“It’s not like you’re a high level magician that is about to take a disciple though?”(Nino)

“Shut up! I’ll bite you!!” (Aten)

“Stupid!? Stop, aren’t your fangs poisonous!?”

I and the other guys looked at the scene of Aten attacking Nino with a lukewarm gaze. Looking at this stupidly noisy fight, I was slightly reminded of the time I was in my previous world.



Chapter 32 - Irz Blader and Luggage Carrying (2)

It has been one month since I started my life as an adventurer. I have become accustomed to sleeping outdoors as well.

Well, my body won't get fatigued even if I went 3 days without sleeping though. And my body has become so sturdy that I can pretty much take rest just by lying down on the bare ground.

But, just because I can do so doesn't mean it's comfortable. Humans are meant to lead a healthy and cultured life.

So I learned the basic minimum things like putting a tent or methods to start a fire and other required camp skills.

Of course, I have the all purpose magic Swiss knife Efreet's thumb, so I'm pretty relaxed about things related to fire.

"What are you doing Kurono-san?"

I thrust the knife in the ground at the centre of the camp and answered Harry.

"Aah, this is an insect repellent."

"Insect repellent?—Wait, could it be that knife, is it a magic weapon!?"(harry)

"Yeah that's right.....is it really that surprising?"

Overhearing Harry's talk about a magic weapon, Aten also came.

"So nice....I also want a magic weapon!"(Aten)

It feels as if she would pick up the knife right now and take it home with her.

"I'm not giving it to you."(kurono)

I should make sure, just in case.

"What kind of item is this? You have appraised it right?"

“Yeah, it’s called Efreet’s thumb and——”

I explained the knife to them.

I told them that it didn’t have any attack power and at most could be used to put a barrier against insects, but yet the magical weapon seems fascinating to them.

“——but, is it really that rare?”

“It’s not that rare but, even the cheapest magical weapon would be at least 10 gold.”

“We don’t really have that much capital with us. And a magic weapon as cheap as 10 gold would often turn out to be a cheap fake or a cursed weapon. If you go to the city, they sell a lot of them like those so be careful.”

“I see.”

It was something with such a high price? Maybe I should value it a bit more?

Sorry to have always treated you like a convenient tool, Efreet.

“But still, which dungeon did you get it from?”

“I got this from a treasure box at Lily’s house.”

“So, from the magician’s hut in the forest?”

The magician had contributed a lot to the Irz village and could also use lots of amazing magic, so he is still popular.

“Yeah.”

“If it was a magician’s treasure box, didn’t it have some seal or protection casted on it?”

“It was reinforced and also had an electric trap but I did my best and opened it.”

“As if it’s that easy.”

“Maybe Kurono-san is more suited to be a thief than a magician?”

“Thief you say.....”(kurono)

“For the adventurers who venture into the dungeons, people with the thief class, who can disengage traps and open locked chests and doors are indispensable after all.”(Aten)

“People with such skills have been called thieves from a long time so even if they don’t actually rob people, they are still called as thieves.”(harry)

“Oh I see, so it’s a normal class.”

My common sense as an adventurer learnt something new again.

Also, Aten has been constantly looking at my knife with envy. She won’t suddenly change into a thief class that actually commits crime/robbery right?

The place where we had set up our camp was at the foot of Gallahad mountains, a bit away from the highway. Near the highway, there was a clearing where monsters usually don’t come.

Adventurers that climb the mountain range usually make a base around here. I haven’t confirmed it but, there’s another adventurer party’s camp somewhere nearby.

It’s quite a safe place but lowering your guard meant failure for an adventurer. At the very least, we need to keep watch during night time.

“n, is it Kurono?” (Claydor)

The one who is keeping watch right now is the silent lizardman, Claydor.

The bronze guild card indicating a rank 2 adventurer shone due to the campfire around his neck.

Since I am a rank 1, I had an iron plate. I wonder when will it turn into a bronze plate?

“Is it fine to stay up for so long?”

After this, Nino, Harry will change shifts by rotation.

Aten does not have any shift, not because of a stupid reason like she was a woman, but because for magic users concentration is important so it’s better to avoid fatigue as much as possible.

One can swing a sword even when tired, but the danger of misfiring magic due to tiredness was of a different level.

So, night watch in Irz Blader was done by the men only.

“I thought I’ll also keep guard with you but am I in the way?”(kuroono)

“No, but are you sure you want to do something not asked in the quest?”(Claydor)

“I’m doing this out of my own volition, so don’t worry. Well I wanted to experience something adventurer-like too.”

“It’s only tedious and boring though.”

“Then it’s better to do it together right?”

“I guess so.”

It’s good that I was able to talk properly. I was afraid that I might not be liked very much.

Lizardmen have literally the head of a lizard so it’s difficult to read their expressions, at least it’s not possible for me right now.

I was slightly worried, but after talking with him I realized that he seemed like a normal good guy.

Even if only slight, we are going together to do a dangerous job so I want to build good human relations with them, ah, I guess I’m the only human here though. Well whatever.

“—Claydol, why did you become an adventurer?”

I decided to talk with him while sitting beside the fire under the quiet night sky.

“I wanted to protect the village like dad does in the vigilante corps. But, only adventurers can experience fighting a lot of monsters.”

“I see. So you want to get as strong as you can get.”

“Yeah, dad was also an adventurer when he was young so I’m just imitating him though.”

“No, it’s pretty commendable. It’s a much better reason to become an adventurer than someone who became one only to earn lots of money.”

“Is that so? I thought I was an irregular as an adventurer.”

“Maybe because the value system here is much different from where I came, rather than having big dreams, I find working towards a realistic future-oriented goal more valuable and better.”(kurono)

“I see.....people think like that as well.”

“Yeah, you’re a fine guy. It’s okay to be proud and confident——“

Compared to him, my reason is – to live huh.....It’s a bit pathetic but it can’t be helped since I’m trying to survive in an unknown land after all.

“Why did you become an adventurer?—— it’s fine not to talk if you have any special circumstances.”(Claydor)

“I became one for my livelihood——.....no, I’m searching for a type of magic. It’s a special summoning magic that can’t be done without equipment found in ancient historic ruins or temples.”

“Is Kurono’s speciality summoning magic?”

“No, I’m not searching it to master it. I need it to return to my home.”

“I had heard that you had come from a faraway country.....so it’s that far away.”

“Something like that, well, I’m interested in living here as well so I’m taking it easily.”

“I see——hm?”

Probably because he sensed something, Claydor stood up with the spear in his hand.

“What happened? I can’t sense any monster though.”(kurono)

“It’s not a monster, it’s a——monkey.”

As he swung the spear lightly in the bushes, with a rustling sound a small shadow jumped out.

“ooh.....it really is a monkey.”

Two figures of monkeys of height same as Lily shone from the light of the campfire.

Yellow shining eyes, they had a greyish coloured body.

“Kaa!!”

Claydor gave a roar and the monkeys panicked and ran away back into the darkness.

“Those monkeys don’t attack but they steal food. If left alone, they’ll call their friends and completely take away everything. But if you threaten them once like this, they’ll recognise it as danger and won’t come closer again.”(claydor)

“I see.....”(kuroono)

I can sense monsters with bloodlust and humans but animals like that are difficult to sense for me.

I see, enemies that could attack were not just monsters.

Claydor had immediately sensed the approaching monkey, and I was shown the difference in experience.

“Yareyare, looks the road to a first class adventurer is going to be a long one——”(kuroono)

Chapter 33 - Rampaging Beast Dortoth (or Doltos/Dortos)

It was a pretty wide open space even though it was among the mountains.

About 10 minutes ago, as we continued cautiously, Nino who was in the vanguard was suddenly attacked by a giant green amoeba-like creature and then, around 10 more similar creatures also appeared from our surroundings.

“They’re just slimes! Deal with them as you see fit!”

Ooh, this is the famous slime monster? As I nonchalantly thought that, the members of Irz Blader took up their respective weapons and started fighting the group of slimes.

Nino slashed the slimes left and right and behind him, Claydor swung his spear to cover him.

At the moment where the slimes were about rush towards the two of them,

「Ice Blast!!」 —ال نار ان تشار ت جم يد ال باردة ال ج ل يد

Aten released the magic after completing her chant.

The slimes that were closing in on the vanguards had their liquid bodies frozen up in a matter of few seconds and finally stopped moving. Just with a slight poke from a spear or sword, the frozen slimes scattered in pieces.

All this happened in the past 10 minutes, and now we are back to present.

“It’s such stable and calm way of fighting——”(kuroono)

It felt like I was watching a recorded scene of balanced RPG party taking out the representative of small fry monsters aka slimes.

Also, I was just a luggage carrier; I don’t need to take part in battle either so nobody is going to complain even if I just leisurely spectate like this.

So, as I had planned, I could observe how an actual adventurer party does battle.

Although I don't want to brag but I am well aware that I am also no amateur when it comes to battles. But that's only in the case of solo battles. I won't be able to cooperate and coordinate like them.

Even monsters attack by forming groups and teams, but as expected, it doesn't even compare to the team play showed by people with intelligence.

I understood that although individually the members of Irz Blader are only as strong as a normal level 2, as a team they can display a much greater strength.

"Alright. Looks like they ran away."

As I wondered whether slimes had the ability to understand and feel danger, the slimes ran away in all directions.

"Although it won't earn us much but, since we have a luggage carrier, might as well collect the cores——"

Nino picked up the proof of defeating slimes that was the core, at that moment,

zuzun——

"Is it an earthquake?....."

What is it? It seems I was the only one who was in doubt. Rest all were looking with serious faces towards the direction where the source might be.

"To think it would come to us. That saves us the trouble."

Nino unsheathed his sword again and lined up along with Claydor.

"Kurono, you should get away a bit."

Aten says that to me and then starts chanting with her staff.

Harry nocked 3 arrows together on his bow and stood in front of her.

Everyone was in complete battle mode.

I felt the sound and vibrations coming closer.

This situation is definitely ——

“BAOOOOON!!”

With a shrill roar, a grey figure jumped out as it toppled the trees.

It was similar to the giant elephant I had seen once at the zoo but, its figure charging madly towards us looked more like a wild boar to me.

The most similar features were its long nose and the fur and tusks that looked like that of a mammoth.

But the shape of those tusks was more similar to the horns of a reindeer that spread out greatly.

This is the main target monster of the quest. The source of the mysterious meat. The rampaging beast Dortoth.

hiyuu—*bang*!

The first attack made on the rushing Dortoth was by Harry’s arrows.

All the three arrows were fired together and stuck on the beast’s head but its charge didn’t slow one bit.

It approached Nino and Claydor like a 10 ton truck.

“Aten!”

「Ice armour shield!!」
الـ صـلـبـ الـ جـلـ يـدـرـعـ الـ بـارـدةـ دـتـ جـمـيـ مـنـعـ هـيـرـوـشـيـ كـ يـكـو

Since she had been chanting from a long time already, Aten’s magic was instantly activated. The moment the Dortoth and the two of them were about to collide, a shield of ice appeared between them.

The Dortoth had no way to dodge the suddenly appearing ice wall but it didn’t intend to do so either.

And it collided head-on at full speed with the ice wall.

Due to the overwhelming speed and power of the charge, the ice wall shattered apart.

But, although it destroyed the wall, its charge had been stopped and it fell down due to the shock from the impact

“Now!!”

Stepping over the broken ice wall, Nino and Claydor attacked the downed Dortoth.

Aiming for the head, they slashed it twice, thrice but they were unable to deal a fatal blow due to its stiff fur and thick skull.

With a groan, the Dortoth stood back up.

Swinging its giant tusks, it drove the two attacking its head away.

Maybe due to the magical energy inside those tusks, they were wrapped in winds and created a whirlwind.

“Uooh—-“

The tusks wrapped in winds lightly grazed Nino and his body was blown away.

It tried to chase Nino who was in mid air but was blocked by Claydor’s spear and Harry’s covering fire.

“——toh.”

In mid air, truly like a cat Nino fixed his posture and lightly landed on the ground. He raised his sword once more and charged towards the rampaging Dortoth.

“This one is a big prey after a long time. We’ll defeat it definitely!”

“”Ooh!!””

Seeing the members of Irz Blader enjoying fiercely fighting the beast with an energetic shout, I felt a bit envious.

“Well done.”

After the long fight, I, the only one with energy, called out to the dead tired members.

“Yeah. I’m tired....we leave the rest to you Kurono.”

Saying that, Nino sprawled on the ground. Beside him was the giant body of the Dortoth. Nino had had used a martial art and pierced the forehead

which became the fatal wound. Other than that, the various wounds created by the other members were also left all over its body.

Monsters have a stronger vitality than normal animals so they have to be damaged at least this much or they won't die. If it's a big monster, then all the more so.

Although damaging the outside too much might not be a good method for hunting quests, but here only the meat is important so it's fine.

"Even if you say that, I don't know how to disassemble animals you know."(kuroono)

"Then just put it all inside with Spatial Magic."(Aten)

"Don't make it sound so easy Aten. Something as big as this will just barely fit inside."

"Eh? Barely? You mean you really can store all of it!?"

"Probably, yeah."

Ooh! Everyone raised their voices in admiration and astonishment. Oi, I said probably. I might have to leave a leg or something behind.

"It's fine, it's fine! If you can, just do it already!"(Aten)

"We'll be counting on you Kuroono-san. Well, normally one would disassemble it here but other monsters might be attracted to the smell of blood and come here."(harry)

"I see. If we can move it then we should do it quickly, is it?"

"Yes, please. If you want we can increase the reward too."

"If you are willing to go that far, fine, I might as well try it——Shadow Space."

Even without the additional increase in reward, I was going to do it anyway but since you said so, I might as well take it!

The shadow stretched out from me and reached the beast's body.

Then I opened the shadow space at max limit and started to take it inside slowly.

“Kuh, it’s a bit of a pain when the object is very heavy and big…….”

Still, I’ll somehow settle it inside. Once the space is closed then weight and size don’t matter anymore. I have to endure a bit more.

“It’s done.”(kuronono)

“oooh Amazing Kurono!!”

Aten’s tail slithered and entwined around my body. She might want to show some skinship but being entwined by a large snake is a bit scary.

“Guh, let me go Aten……”(kuronono)

“Don’t be embarrassed～”(aten)

“No, I’m actually scared.”

“What!?!”

Anyway, we somehow completed the objective of the quest.

“Now then, for the completion of the quest——”

“”Cheers””

In the Irz village guild, the voices of Irz Blader + a luggage carrier resounded.

5 days after leaving the village, we had returned after safely completing our quest.

We returned by the afternoon but taking the reward and completing other formalities took time and it was now evening, and we were now sitting together with sake in our hands.

I’ll drink as well of course. After all, there is no law limiting minors to not drink alcohol in this world.

But, maybe due to the effect of the various body modifications (?), no matter how much I drink, I only get a bit tipsy but not more than that.

“ohh, are you drinking kuronoo～” (Aten)

Aten, whose face had already become red, slithered towards me.

“This time we were able to complete the quest easily thanks to Kurono’s help so you have my thanks.”(aten)

“Yes, we want to ask for your help again.”(Harry)

“Yeah, you really helped a lot.”(Claydor)

“Well, he worked perfectly as per his reward.”(Nino)

I got a bit embarrassed on being complimented by everyone.

“Everyone, Thank You!!” (kurono)

But it’s true that I’m also happy.

Even if it was a different world, being complimented for your hard work is always nice.

I felt that I was once again slightly accepted by this world.

Definitely, from hereon I will meet many more people, and deepen my bonds with them.

But, the one that came in my mind at this moment was my first friend in this different world, my partner, her small face.

“Ah, I want to meet Lily—”

Chapter 34 - Night of the Full Moon

I escaped from the banquet of the party members and made my way back. In truth, it might have been okay to drink all night and return tomorrow (in fact, I was told to do so), but I wanted to see Lily's face by today no matter what, so it can't be helped.

It has been five days since I had sent the letter, did she miss me? I've missed her.

But this time I have used nearly half of the reward I got and bought a heap of candies and fruit for Lily.

Lily's happy face came to my mind. While being restless in the reunion after sometime, I opened the door of the hut.

"I'm home—"

After opening the door, what entered my sight was the already familiar room.

Now that I have started living here, the room is organised and gives a fresh feeling.

Interrupting those thoughts,

"Kurono!"

A voice came from a beautiful girl calling out my name.

That's right, the speaker of this voice is Lily—No wait, wasn't Lily's voice more childish?

Without having the time to think about the uneasiness, my view is blocked by a white light.

"Ugh... so bright!"

"Kuronoooo— — ! "

At the same time, I felt an impact on my body from something.

Somehow I stand firm and avoid falling down. I felt the soft sensation of someone embracing my body.

What is it, for Lily to be this, isn't it too big?

However, I can't think of anyone else who can call my name and lives in this house.

"Li, Lily, is that you?"

The view that was obscured by that white flash gradually returns to normal. And then, I supposedly see the person who is embracing me.

“.....Are you Lily?”

I once again say the same words.

“Un, I’m Lily?”

While embracing me the girl answers. The naked body with a white radiance, long platinum hair and the two wings with seven colors like a prism were without a doubt Lily’s traits.

However this form is fundamentally different. The little girl who has these traits was changed into a young girl with the same traits.

“Lily has become bigger!?”

In other words, it’s that.

If we think of the figure of the little Lily as a human child, then the Lily in front of me has grown 10 years and looks a middle schooler.

What, just what the hell does this mean? Lily is 32 years old, during that time she was a small girl, so why the hell did she suddenly grow bigger?

During the five days I was away from the home, just what the hell happened to Lily’s body!

“I was lonely Kurono, I don’t want you to go somewhere alone anymore.”

“Y,Yeah, sorry.....”

Rather than the young Lily, I can’t hide my surprise on hearing her speak in clear tone.

“.....For the time being can you get off of me?”

“No.”

shock The Lily that used to so obedient to my words is.....Is it the rebellious age?

“If you don’t step back, I can’t enter the house.”

“Then, take me to bed like this.”

The young Lily smoothly speaks a line that might cause various misunderstandings.

She stares at me with moist and upturned eyes, and at that moment, for the first time I look straight into young Lily’s face.

“Uu——”

She's so much beautiful, it sends shiver down my spine.

It seems like I'll be sucked up in her green eyes, which eclipse the glow of an emerald.

Her long eyelashes, along with lightly shining body and hair are increasing her glow even more.

"....."

I close my eyes for a moment, and calm down my heart.

I was dangerously near to being fascinated by her charm.

In this world, the beautiful things contain the magic to captivate the hearts of a person with just that.

Just as the statue of a god contains powers, it is said that the beautiful things have the power to captivate the hearts of anyone with just seeing in it's eyes, with just its smile and by just exchanging some words.

This is called a 'Fascination Charm', it is counted as a sort of bad status.

Inside this magic filled other world, I thought the story was a fake when I first heard it. I never thought I would be able to experience it by myself.

"Lily——"

"Please~"

It can't be helped, it looks like Lily has not will to surrender.

Anyhow, right now the first priority is to learn what happened to Lily's body.

Reluctantly, I carry Lily to bed like a princess in my arms.

Even though she's turned into a young girl, she still gives a mysterious feeling when held in arms that is neither soft nor heavy.

"Ufufu, thank you Kurono."

To me who is still a virgin high school boy, the scene of a naked young girl lying on the bed is too much stimulating.

Whether or not her body is shining in white light, naked is naked. When Lily was in the little girl's form there was not much resistance, but now in the young girl's form there are various places that are bothering me.

The scene in front of me is on the level, that if it was a picture, one would keep staring at it without caring about public gazes. But the person in front

of me is my most trusted partner, therefore I won't tolerate any insolence regarding her.

"Can you wear a blanket?"

"No~"

It really is the rebellious stage!?

I sit on the bed and straighten up my back, while Lily grabs my hand.

If she asks in a small child form to be spoiled, I can easily accept it, but I'm not a stoic adult who can remain calm while being clinged on by a naked young girl.

"Then at least wear this."

I take off the black robe with a straightforward official name : "Demon's Embrace 'Baphomet Embrace' " which has already become my favorite and put it on Lily.

"nfufun, It smells of Kurono."

"A, Sorry, because I've been wearing it all the time it smells—"

"It's alright like this, it settles me down."

Lily with an expression of being entranced closes her eyes. I bear with it to not become someone to keep on looking at her silently. I decide to cut right to the point.

"Lily, what is happening with you? Before you were so small, I still find it hard to believe you're the same person."

"You're terrible Kurono, we lived together and you don't recognise me?"

She hugs my hand and pushes her body forward. On that reaction my heart beat gets faster.

Calm down me, calm down and just concentrate on the conversation.

"It's not like I don't know, but your appearance is so different, I got confused."

"Fufu, That's right. That's why I'll only tell Kurono my secret."

Lily gently strokes my cheeks with her slender fingers and grips them while bringing her face toward me.

It's a little pushy, but I don't resist and keep on staring into Lily's eyes.

A cold sweat flows down my cheek, what the hell is with this feeling of tension? Little Lily, please comeback!

“Those of the fairy tribe have a growth in power on the nights of a full moon like today. It is said that the fairy queen come to this world to play from the moon.”

Wha, what is with this Maerchen (lit: fairy tale) type of back story, so is the address of fairy queen on the moon’s surface full of craters, huh?

“Ufufu, I don’t know if it’s the truth or not, but if it’s truth then maybe we can meet with fairy queen on the night of fullmoon.”

“I see. just like an allegorical tradition.”

“Yeah, but no matter what, it is a fact that the power of the fairy tribe increases. And it seems like it’s influence is more powerful towards me, who is half human and half magic beast. That’s why I can return to my original form on nights of full moon.”

“.....Original form?”

In that case, who is the small Lily with whom I lived.

“That is a temporary form. If I’m away from the light of the fountain, my magic and intelligence have a drastic fall and I change into the child form.”

“Is that so.....”

“Un, that is so. The current me retains the memory of the small me, and when I turn small I will retain the memories of this time too. But that child has low thinking capabilities so it won’t understand many things.”

It’s hard to accept it suddenly, but the way she explains things, I can sense the intelligence in her.

Different from the usual small Lily, she feels like someone who has lived many years.

“I’m glad that Kurono came back tonight. I’ve thought a lot about wanting to talk to you properly. If I missed today, I would have had to wait another month.”

I’m getting caught up being fascinated by the smiling Lily and can’t have a proper conversation.

“Nee~ Kurono, I understand completely that you came to this world alone. You were treated badly by evil people, but still you don’t give up and try to live your life. And that I treasure about you very much.”

“Lily——”

At that moment, from the bottom of my heart, I was completely convinced that this girl is Lily.

I also understood that Lily comprehended the circumstances I am in and what I told her.

The first person person who understood me is without a doubt, Lily.

“—Thank you very much.”

“Same to you Kurono, thank you for staying with me.”

“I will always live with you together from now on.”

“Aa~, if Lily stays with me, I can live in this world. I won’t be lonely.”

“Un! If Kurono stays with me, I also won’t get lonely. But I want to talk to Kurono in this form, I have a lot to tell you and a lot to talk about.”

“Yeah, I’ll listen to everything.”

“Ufufu, I won’t let you sleep tonight♪”

And so , Lily and I start talking on the bed with each other. The things that had happened so far and the things that will occur from now on—



Kuro No Maou

- Volume 3 -

Arrival Of Crusaders

Chapter 35 - The Prologue of the 7th

“Welcome to the [White Sacrament] 1st laboratory, Priest Head Ars, no, you are now Senior Priest if I am correct? Congratulations on your promotion.”

“.....No need for sarcasm Bishop Judas.”

Why am I here?

“It’s true that you have become a senior priest, but then again, I guess that was only due to the death of the previous superior.”(judas)

“ You should understand; it is a very cruel condition where someone so young like myself had no choice but to become a senior priest.”(ars)

The two men are talking about something. I know one of them. He is Bishop Judas-sama, a very influential and big person.

I don’t know about the other, but probably, he is also the same.

“This parish does not have the military force to stop another invasion anymore. We need to urgently call reinforcements from the church—“(ars)

“Enough, don’t say anymore. You are not stupid enough to not understand that the parish governed by you has been already abandoned by the church, right?”(Judas)

I wonder what they are talking about.

I cannot understand what they are saying.

“.....are they telling us to die? To be ravaged and killed by that heretic army, is that what they mean!?”(ars)

“So you do understand. Well then, let me ask, why did you come to meet me now?”(judas)

It’s somewhat scary.

To die, to kill, I don’t really understand, but I think it is very scary.

“Bishop Judas, you have stayed here even when all the other priests have run away. You are not going to tell me that you are staying in this dangerous place which could be overrun at anytime, just for you research, right?”(ars)

“I see, I see, and?”(judas)

Heretics.....those who don't believe in god. I have never seen them. Just what kind fearsome creatures are they?

“You are a bishop, a rank higher than my own. And on top of it, even the Pope himself has visited this facility. You have many connections in Elysion, no, if I have to say it frankly, you should have the means to maintain the peace of this land, don't you?”(ars)

It was the first time I heard that the Pope has visited here. It's amazing, but, what is it that's amazing? I don't really understand.

“I see. If you use me, you could call for enforcements from the church, is that what you're expecting?”(judas)

“I understand how unreasonable it is, but please. If I am able to drive those heretics away, and a day where this parish once again regains its peace and blessing of god, I will you pay you back with no matter what you ask for. I swear in the name of God.”(ars)

The man bowed his head. He had a big body but somehow he looked pitiable.

“.....umu, alright.” (judas)

“o, ohh, really—-“

The man thanked a lot of times. He looks happy, no this is different, this is probably 'being saved'.

“Sariel.” (judas)

“Yes.”

I was surprised to be suddenly called by Bishop Judas-sama.

But, nobody probably realized that I was surprised, after all, everyone says that my face is like that of a doll/puppet.

Rather than laughing, or crying, I have been good at just being silent, yes, from a long time.

“Bishop Judas, that girl is?”(ars)

“The ‘reinforcement’ you wished for. Now, take her with you.”(judas)

The man looked at me with a surprise.

I stared back into his blue eyes.

“.....this is not a funny joke, Bishop Judas.”(ars)

“Sariel, he is Senior Priest Ars, how about you introduce yourself?”(judas)

“Yes, I am——“

I thought for a bit.

My name is not——— anymore, it’s Sariel now.

One who has received the divine protection of God, one of the special 12.

“7th Apostle Sariel.”

I introduced myself with this name for the first time.

“Impossible!? The 7th apostle is Lord Ariel of the [silver judgement]! It is unforgivable to use that name—“(ars)

“Ah ‘that’ is already dead. From now on this Sariel is the new 7th apostle. She has not yet been appointed officially so she has yet to be awarded a court rank. So no need to put ‘Lord’ in front of her name when calling her.”(judas)

“An apostle died.....and on top of it, such a young child received the divine protection.....”(Ars)

“Now then, your task is finished right? I still have a lot of research to do.”

As Bishop Judas-sama stood up, he faced me and said.

“Sariel, what is your duty?”(judas)

“Yes, it is to kill the enemies of God.”

“Yes, that is all you need to understand. For everything else, obey Senior Priest Ars’ commands.”(judas)

“Understood, Bishop Judas-sama.”

“fu, I guess this would be the last time to be called with a ‘-sama’ by you.”(judas)

It seems when I’ll become the 7th apostle, I’ll be even above Bishop Judas-sama.

Although I don’t understand what will happen then.

“Then, I shall take my leave now. Senior Priest Ars, may you have the protection of God.”

And thus, my first ‘duty’ began.

Will I be able to do it? Who are the enemies of God? Why am I here? And why am I the only one alive?

I don’t know. I don’t know anything anymore.

But I know just this.

God will not save me—.

Chapter 36 - Formation of the Crusaders

The west-half of the Arc continent was controlled by the Syncrea Republic. In the port town that was the 5th biggest even among the various huge dominions under the republic, the new Magic Battleship [Gargantia] was anchored.

Built through combining the latest magic techniques, this battleship had scared the spectators, which had come to look at it during its unveiling, through the sheer size of the ship.

Size was always linked with strength. Especially in this different world where ferocious monsters lived, 'hugeness' was the easiest proof of strength.

But, not a single emotion could be seen in the eyes of Sariel who was looking at [Gargantia] through the window of a certain room.

For someone who held the strength of an apostle, it was not impossible to sink such a state-of-the-art giant battleship by herself.

No, those shining ruby eyes would not waver no matter what she faced.

That was what the Archbishop known as Liuchrome thought silently in his heart.

"Lord Sariel, how is it? The pride of the navy – magic battleship [Gargantia]?"

Sariel moved her sight away from the window and looked towards Liuchrome.

A tall, slender figure of a handsome young man reflected in her red eyes.

White skin, blonde hair and blue eyes; he possessed the typical features of a resident of the Republic but, every part of his body that made him seemed more perfect than others. Loose wavy blonde hair along with the marine blue eyes and a sharp nose made him look so beautiful that he might be mistaken for a woman

And when he wore the gorgeously decorated white clothes befitting of an archbishop, anyone who believed in the church would not doubt that he was divine being of god.

That beauty truly held an unparalleled charm. It was on a level where any woman who saw him on the street would instantly become a prisoner of his beauty, but,

“Very big.” (Sariel)

What came out of Sariel’s mouth was a very simple thought.

As he himself thought that as expected, even when Sariel was faced with a beauty of his level, there was not even a single trace of emotions in those eyes. In the first place, for Sariel, outer appearance of a person was nothing more than a means to differentiate between people. She had no feelings that could make her judge a person’s beauty or ugliness.

Liuchrome didn’t know whether this was the [Equality] that was preached by the church or that she simply didn’t possess any emotions at all.

“Is that so? I shall convey it to the officers that Lord Sariel had complimented it.”

Sariel once again returned her gaze outside the window.

Whether those eyes were looking at the battleship, or the port, or maybe the sea, no, it could be that she was looking even beyond the horizon.

(“This lady really never changes. It’s as if the time in her body is not moving. But due to the ‘restraint tool ring’ removed, I can feel an even immense divinity from her.....It seems I’ll end up being ‘charmed’ by her instead.”)

Although have been acquainted in the past, the reason they were both here together was because a new title was added to their existing [7th Apostle] and [Archbishop].

They were [Crusaders Supreme Commander] and [Crusaders Vice Commander].

The [Crusaders] were an army organised to deal with threats and to realize the will of their god. They were different from the army stationed inside the country.

200 years ago, the Crusaders were set after a large army of heretics had invaded the holy city Elysiion.

(Anyone would think that they were stuck with an unpleasant duty.)

The objective this time to 'conquer the Pandora continent' is being currently dissented inside the republic.

The reason is definitely something not humane as 'opposition against plundering of other people's land' but very simple economic reasons.

To make the Pandora continent a land for humans, they first had to exterminate the demons living there. Just how much money and lives would be required to fulfil that task? At the very least, even commoners were aware of the cost that would be incurred just in crossing the sea for a large expedition.

(But, His Highness Cardinal Ars saw this formation of the Crusaders as a chance. Even I think that it's a disadvantageous gamble but——)

What came into Liuchrome's minds were the words spoken by the most trusted man, that is, Cardinal Ars.

"He nominated the 7th Apostle Sariel as the supreme commander of the Crusaders. If acknowledged, the conquest of the Pandora continent is almost certain."

And the Pope approved of it, and also acknowledged by the Republic's parliament, Lord Sariel was officially appointed as the Supreme Commander.

("Being told that much, I had no objections anymore.")

Accepting Ars' idea, Liuchrome announced candidacy for the post of Vice Commander. There would be no rival candidates that way.

The final total count of the Crusaders stood at 15,000. Historically speaking, it was probably the smallest amount of Crusaders ever.

What that fact meant, Liuchrome didn't even have to think about it as he spoke to Sariel.

"It will take about 1 week from here to get to Virginia it seems."

As Sariel looked back, she followed Liuchrome line of sight towards the map spread upon the table.

Thanks to the help of magic it was possible to make a map as accurate as the ones in present times but the one in front of them was a simple one made with drawn lines.

That implied that accurate distance and details were not available. That was none other than a map of the yet unexplored Pandora continent.

On that Pandora continent, the only place occupied by the Republic was the port town of [Virginia].

The rias coastline that had developed on the east side of the continent made for a natural good harbour, and was thus ideal terrain to be used as a base for travelling between the 2 continents.

“It will take about 1 month to complete the preparations for transporting the 15,000 man army and all other goods.”

During the time when the settlement and establishment of Virginia was started, the invasion of the Pandora continent had already started and the catchphrase –‘Pandora is a paradise filled with riches’ made a lot of dreamers cross the sea to settle there.

Also receiving funds from the country and the church, the establishment of Virginia was proceeding smoothly.

With the development of the port and residential area, in just a half-year Virginia developed from just a fishing village to a proper Port town. And thus after creating a proper base, they finally began the invasion with military strength.

As per the information, the army that departed from Virginia at that time had about 2000 soldiers, and their aim was a fortress city called [Daidalos].

As to why they attacked [Daidalos] which boasted strong defence with just 2000 men, it cannot be known anymore. Because the commander of that army who was also a high ranking knight with a court rank, acted as a part of the vanguard and was tragically annihilated along with his whole unit.

“It’ll be good if Virginia is not destroyed by Daidalos until the preparations here are completed, no, at least till I and Lord Sariel arrive there in 1 week by the Gargantia.”

And the war made by those 2000 men on Daidalos was the reason the Republic was in the state of war at present.

Basically, due to underestimating the 'army of demons' of Daidalos, the army took over 1200 casualties which was a crushing defeat in the history of the Republic.

According to the report of the survivors, the Daidalos army had the king, a black dragon, at its head, and included races like Orcs, Werewolves, golems, Cyclops, and others that held much more power than humans. Furthermore, their army was more than 10 times in number. In front of overwhelming strength and numbers, there was nothing that could be done.

After that, Daidalos had put Virginia under a siege but they did not break into the city itself and in few weeks returned back.

Virginia was built as a strong fort thanks to the supply of funds that was still continuing, so the Daidalos army must have found it dangerous to uselessly come close to it.

From then up till now, Daidalos has sent various messengers to Virginia asking to leave their country, and have deployed scouts to observe the situation.

Virginia has given no response for the past half year. It's only a matter of time before Daidalos resorts to use of strength. That is why Daidalos could march into Virginia before Sariel and Liuchrome reach there in 1 week.

"Virginia will not fall."

Sariel said that in a small voice as if she was speaking to herself but it held clear confidence.

"The conquest of Pandora continent is wished by the White God, it shall be accomplished without fail."(Sariel)

"Yes, it is as you say Lord Sariel."

That was neither a joke nor façade. As she had said, the conquest of the Pandora Continent was wished by God.

Was the reason why she could say that with such confidence was because she was an Apostle? Or maybe do you reach such a state of mind when you sacrifice yourself to piety?

It was not a problem of faith. It was much simpler. Anyone of the church could understand Sariel's words.

After all, it was literally 'told by the god himself'.

And it was called an [Oracle].

The oracle that came to the church one year ago was,

"Conquer Pandora continent as a sacrifice."

And thus the Republic crossed the sea, landed on the Pandora continent and built Virginia.

The Syncrea Republic who has taken the Church as the state religion, the oracle is not something they can ignore. No matter how disadvantageous it may be, they have to fulfil it with the best of their efforts.

The church has been following the oracles no matter how much difficulty it may bring, without even considering whether it was right or wrong from the very start. And now they had become a faith large enough to possess the whole west half of the Arc continent.

This time, due to the giant army of Daidalos, the conquest of Pandora continent was interrupted and when it seemed that it might stay like that indefinitely, they received the oracle again.

"Conquer Pandora continent as a sacrifice."

Exactly the same as before, no change in even the words.

Having received the same oracle twice, they could not give up like this anymore. They needed to put in even greater efforts.

If they were to use the whole nation's power, they would be able to conquer the Pandora continent.

But, to the Syncrea republic and the church, rather than a savage backwards land, the Arc continent where they have been living was more important.

They could not just leave the Republic which held half the continent just like that for that would result the decline of the country, and fall in the power of their God.

Due to this thought process, the conquering of the Pandora continent was to be done with force without losing the authority in the Arc continent, was what the church decided as the official opinion towards the [oracle].

(“Will be become the sacrifice for gods, or will we get a miraculous victory and become heroes——”)

No one could predict the result of this oracle.

These 15,000 Crusaders were nothing but proof that the will of the God has been followed, that is, they were simply sacrifices, the maximum amount of soldiers the Republic could afford to lose.

But still, if the Crusaders led by Sariel break through the Daidalos army, the whole situation would be reversed.

The whole 15,000 man army including Liuchrome himself were relying on the words of Ars. If they were able to conquer Daidalos, and take the one big step on the Pandora continent, the profits and advantages that will be earned by the top of the Crusaders aka Ars are uncomparable.

The Crusaders have almost no chance of winning, but in exchange, if they won, the returns are amazing.

For Ars it is a big gamble with his life on the line, but only Liuchrome and the people around him realize this. Ars himself was already assured of victory the moment he put Sariel on the seat of the commander.

(“——the die has been cast already. All I have to do is just give my all to lead the Crusaders to victory.”)

Rychrom did not have any regrets. No matter how difficult the situation was, under Ars, he was protected and served him and as a result he became an archbishop today.

It's the same even now. All I have to do is execute Ars' commands, and,

(“Lord Sariel, for the Cardinal Ars that has faith in you, I shall put my faith in you as well.”)

Rychrom swore to dedicate all his faith towards Sariel.

And thus, leading the 15,000 Crusaders, 7th Apostle Sariel crossed the seas towards the Pandora continent.

This day, the 4th day of the month of Ryokufuu(Early-summer breeze), was also the fateful day when Kurono met Lily for the first time.

Chapter 37 - The Charisma of an Apostle

In front of the state-of-the-art Magic Battleship [Gargantia] that arrived at the Virginia port, Priest Head Maxwell breathed a sigh.

“An Apostle.....”

One year ago, he was one of the first members to have landed on the Pandora continent.

Being a devout believer of the church, even though he was a Priest Head, he still chose to realize god’s will by participating in the conquest of Pandora continent.

Reaching an unknown continent, he was even attacked by wild monsters, after many hardships established this Virginia, and half year ago even took part in the invasion of Daidalos.

He was presently the person who had contributed the most in the establishment of Virginia. After the death of the Knight Commander, all other high ranking members ran back to the republic and Maxwell ended up becoming the highest ranked church official here.

And being a representative of church meant that he stood at the top of all the people here who were believers of the church as they were the people of the Republic.

And thus, as the representative of Virginia, he was waiting to greet the Apostle Commander of the Crusaders.

On both of his sides stood his young Priest disciples and behind them along with other members of the church were the numerous citizens who were here to catch a glimpse of the messiah-like Apostle.

They were still cheering with joy and were waving their hands towards the giant Battleship.

It was not that Maxwell did not understand their feelings. In front of the fearsome army of demons where they could be attacked any time, a reinforcement of a 15,000 man army had arrived.

The commander of that army was nothing less than a messiah for them.

But, Maxwell was holding a doubt in his mind. Just what kind of person was the Apostle?

The Apostle coming here known as Sariel, was the 7th apostle and a young girl. But that was all he knew.

No matter how young, an Apostle was loved by the god; there was no doubt that they held incredible strength. But that did not imply that they directly control men.

What they possessed was simply combat and fighting strength.

Probably the young Apostle was just an emblem, and the true command will be taken by the second-in-command who would be a high ranking official.

And Maxwell did not believe in 'high-ranking priests and officials'.

In the first place, the ones who abandoned Virginia and ran away were these people. Just that was enough to garner distrust in the higher ups of the church but, Maxwell did not believe in them even before that.

He was also someone who had become a Priest Head. Senior Priests or Bishops who worked in Elysion were what kind of people, he had known from the time he was a child.

In his words, the church's organization was corrupt. Each and every one of them were fools blinded by promotions and success and could only think about using and kicking others down. Bribes were prevalent, and what could be attained only by priest through devotion, faith and practice was now bought with money.

In such a world, Maxwell had already become unable to bear it by the time he earned the title of Priest Head.

He closed his paths to success by himself and threw himself in countless battlefields for the sake of serving God.

And, accepting the precise [oracle] that was received, he unhesitatingly decided to take part in the operations to conquer Pandora continent. There was no way he would ever regret that decision.

The experiences here were painful similar to all other battlefields, but that is the trial set by God. To work towards the will of god as a proper believer was the only job worth doing, or so Maxwell truly believed in his heart.

That is why he held unpleasant feelings thinking that priests drowned in greed had once again arrived in this Virginia, a place for 'true believers'.

He did not know what were the people who had come were like, but he seriously thought that if they were to use this god's land for their own selfish desires, then he would erase them.

There is no surveillance in this far away land either so you could kill as many by calling it an accident.

Having resolved that much, Maxwell was standing here to greet the commander.

("I shall make sure whether you are suitable enough for this land—")

The wrinkled face that had gone beyond the middle age, grimly warped.

But in that trained body there were no signs of wearing down due to age. Due to the strong keenness of Maxwell, the two disciples also shivered with nervousness.

At that moment, at last, the doors of the Battleship opened. What appeared was a tall and slender youth.

Wavy blond hair and beauty like that of a woman, he could be mistaken for a delicate man but the white robe on his body stole away all attention.

("An Archbishop.....at such a young age.....")

Maxwell could understand that in a single glance. An Archbishop was a rank high enough to be a candidate to become the next Cardinal. It was in a level completely different from a Priest head.

("Then that means he is the commander, no wait, the commander was supposed to be an Apostle.....")

The strongest of the church were the Apostles. And an Archbishop was the 3rd highest position if you exclude the Apostles. He could understand one of them but for both to have appeared, Maxwell could not hide his surprise.

His assumption that the aide would be a Senior Priest or a bishop at max was completely overturned.

With the appearance of someone who looked he was so close to heaven, a bead of sweat flowed down Maxwell's forehead. He was envious of his disciples who had yet not realized that the other man was an Archbishop. With elegant actions, the youth who was an Archbishop took the hand of someone behind him and started to come down the ramp.

The one who was lead by him was, yes, none other than the 7th Apostle Sariel.

The pure white majestic appearance was finally exposed in the light.

"Aah——"

At that moment, the port that was filled with cheers and shouts suddenly became completely silent.

White clothes, white skin, white hair, and radiant ruby eyes.

That appearance was something, which could not be painted by any artist, could not be sculpted by any sculptor; it was something truly only a god could create, that shining white beauty.

"——So, beautiful."

Tears appeared unknowingly in the eyes, just by being captivated by this divine beauty.

Led by the Archbishop, slowly, she came closer.

A feeling that was not attained even when meeting the Pope himself was suddenly born inside, as if he was blessed by the real god himself. A sense of peace, and sufficiency came inside his heart.

Maxwell, kneeled down naturally, put both his hands in front of his chest, and took the stance of praying.

"Priest Head Maxwell, right?"

Sariel who had come directly in front of him called out. Even though he had never experienced it, he felt as if he just heard the words of God.

"Yes."

“You did well protecting Virginia till now. From here onwards, together with the Crusaders, let us fulfil the divine will of God.”

Sariel’s small white hand gently caressed Maxwell’s bowing face.

“Yes! This Maxwell will dedicate his everything in assisting 7th Apostle Lord Sariel!!”

Unable to hold back his tears, still Maxwell strongly replied.

As he had said, he swore in his heart to devote everything for Sariel.

“__-“

Sariel was, expressionless, still silent, and then slowly gave a small wave towards the still silent crowd.

At that moment, cheers and cries of joy broke out, and enthusiasm at a fanatical level wrapped the whole of Virginia.

Seeing such a situation, Sariel’s eyes still showed no emotion.

After the ring of restraint had been removed, and released from the limiting of powers, similar to ‘other Apostles’, divine protection filled her body and she held true ‘divinity’.

Similar to how objects made after god held power, the beauty of the girl who was loved by God held the power to completely charm any who was a believer of the church.

The stronger the faith then even more so. At this moment, Maxwell had been touched by the power of a real god.

Chapter 38 – Story of a Certain Witch.

On the main gates of Virginia stronghold, stood a girl.

The beautiful girl had faint light blue hair like a spring water flowing and had shining gold eyes which were more than enough to charm a person, but her expression looked like absentminded sleepy expression.

The girl wore a tri-cornered hat, and was clad in black clothes. She held a long staff in her hands.

Even if a person from arc continent or pandora continent saw her, they would call her a “witch”.

They are not any different from magicians in terms of class, but the girl’s three-set equipment of a black three-cornered hat, black robe along with a long staff is commonly called as “witch”.

The stories about witches are too much famous, everyone will at least know one fairy-tale that is related to witches.

That girl didn’t had any business at the stronghold, rather she was going away from the stronghold.

The gatekeeper of the main gate called out to the leaving girl.

“Young Miss, the long-awaited crusaders finally came here, and you’re going to step down here?”

The girl stops, and nods towards the gatekeeper.

“Speaking of “Apostle”, it is the strongest soldier that the church boasts of, along with that the archbishop who is also taking command of the 15,000 elite forces. The mercenaries will go along the flow of victory and win this war, isn’t it?”

He did not participate in the previous Daidalos invasion, so he probably did not know the fearsomeness of the demon army.

But, the girl had no interest in pointing it out because the words said by him were plenty enough to be agreeable.

The consequence of the previous invasion was due to them underestimating the demon army, they were all in a terrible state though the girl didn’t bear a single scratch.

But this time, they had arranged plenty of good military forces for counter attacking tactics.

It took nearly one month, but finally the reinforcements of 15000 soldiers and the provisions along with various other things assembled in Virginia. The outcome of war couldn't be predicted even by the girl, but they would certainly be able to fight a lot better than the previous war.

The people who came to pandora continent as mercenaries, will get desperate to display their powers to receive a huge amount of reward. If the mercenaries ran away during the defeat in previous invasion then it was fine, but for them to run away during the time of winning streak is difficult to think of due to their personalities.

At least, the gatekeeper did not think that the girl was running away from here due to her fear of battle.

That is because, if she wanted to escape, she could've gone to the harbour to board the ship bound to her country as the priests did half a year ago, but going towards the pandora land is not the way of thinking of a person trying to run away.

"Are you really going out?"

The girl once again nods.

The gatekeeper thought, though the girl has half-opened sleepy eyes, her decision was rather solid.

"Is that so, where are you going? do you have a place in mind?"

The girl replies with constant expression.

"A place where food is more delicious."

The gatekeeper sees off the girl while thinking "as expected the witches are different from normal people."

The next day, was the day the 15000 crusaders lead by Sariel departed towards Daidalos.

Chapter 39 – The Dragon King

The king stood up from the throne, upon hearing the report of 15000 mercenaries departing from Virginia.

The name of the king is Gaevinal, at a glance he looks like a strong build human in his prime having 2 metres of body height, but in truth he is a genuine dragon.

The dragon are a race having large amount of Physical strength magical energy, and are completely different from other races. Among them the dragons with strongest strength called as “black dragons” is the tribe of Gaevinal.

Even among the dragons who are fundamentally individualists, Gaevinal had the ambition to rule over everything just like the ancient emperor who had once made the great empire that had governed pandora continent in his generation.

In the midst of implementing his ambition, the thing concerning him the most is the city-state “Spada” that extends after crossing the “Gallahad mountain range” which is governed by the sword king “Leonhart” who has the equal strength as him. [ET: the author is a copycat in names. Should go to school.]

He had not even thought of the human army coming to invade by crossing all the way over the seas.

However,

“Despite of giving them the warnings to that extent, they still send out the soldiers.....they are more foolish than what I had thought.”

“It is too much of a hassle, let’s send them out of Pandora continent but not to their hometown, but to hell.”

Now that they have once again risen against Daidalos, Gaevinal was not going to just be happy with making them leave the country anymore, he decided to completely annihilate Virginia.

But soon things would turn out like this, was even predicted by the top brass of Daidalos along with Gaevinal.

That is because of the report of large ships coming in and out, consisting of large amounts of humans and goods.

It was obvious that in near future, humans would not accept the demand for evacuation and come with counter offensive tactics.

The reason, why they didn't obstruct the arrival of ships to Virginia was because Daidalos doesn't have a navy force. Even without it, if the humans gather many number of people and start attacking first, it will be easy to kick them around or so Gaevinal was thinking.

Starting from dragon, the daidalos army was being organised with the beast men who were similar to monsters as the main force.

The assault by the means of strong offensive ability and mobility were the strong forte of the Daidalos Army. The humans cannot defeat it with even with tens of thousands of soldiers on plain fields.

Therefore, no matter how much military force Virginia has, as long as they strike first, daidalos can intercept it as many times.

Normally, their base point Virginia would also be destroyed, but as it is a stronghold which boasts a solid defence, they need to have determination to suffer some losses.

The Daidalos army was unparalleled on the field but if they are unable to show their mobility to full extent, it would be difficult to end a castle siege war in short time and would become a weakness.

As a result, Virginia's base has great defensive ability but no offensive ability, in the current situation to reduce the loss the most good idea would be to intercept them through a blockade and stop their advance.

To Gaevinal the enemies were not the humans from Virginia but the city-state army of Spada.

Considering the invasion by Spada in near future, Gaevinal wanted to avoid dissipation of war potential.

Gaevinal thought that the defense corps of Daidalos are more than enough for intercepting the humans, though it will leave the anxiety about future.

But in the end, before I went ahead leading the army to Spada, the humans had started to invade.[ET: This author can't seem to maintain a single tense or perspective. right now its first-person perspective.]

If I was not here, the humans might have fought a bit better, but for them to strike at such a timing, the bad luck of humans is hilarious .

Either way, it is impossible for the likes of human to defeat Daidalos.

“So the, shall we go.”

Gaevinal headed towards the main gate of imperial palace.

Below him, 20000 soldiers in black armor and helmet had already been gathered and were waiting to get the order for departure.

“From now, we will head to defeat the foolish humans, don’t let a single one return back alive——”

Gaevinal transformed from the temporary human form to his original dragon form.

“——Advance Forward!”

Along with the roar, the advance order is given, the 20000 daidalos soldiers start marching like an avalanche.

Gaevinal who has transformed into a giant dragon with jet black scales, flaps both his wings, while creating a sudden gust of winds soars up in the sky.

The subordinate flying dragons that were already in the air, started following Gaevinal and flew away with him.

The place they were heading for is, the halfway point between Daidalos and Virginia, the Goldran hilly area.

The dragons swore for a certain victory and roared which echoed in the whole Daidalos and headed towards the territory of the decisive battle.

Chapter 40 – Decisive Battle • Goldran Hill

The crusaders, finally completing the invasion strategy departed on the seventh day of the month Distant Thunder.

The elite corps of 15000 men selected by Cardinal Ars, being lead by Sariel. The crusaders camped in Goldran Hills near guard point with good visibility.

During the previous invasion they suffered defeat by the hands of Daidalos here and the place has some shady history in itself, but there is no better place than this to march forward in full power along with 15000-strong corps.

The Daidalos will also decide this place for the decisive battle like the previous time, as in this hilly region they can display their maximum mobility war potential.

Thus, both the Crusaders and Daidalos army would meet each other at Goldran Hills.

Both parties arrange their battle formation, and it becomes a competition of glaring at each other.

“—I’m entrusting command authority to you, Archbishop Liuchrome.”

Sariel gives a command while sitting on top of pure white pegasus.

“Yes, acknowledged.”

Liuchrome bows down his head. On his beautiful face there is no tension from commanding an army of 15000 men or the fear of the upcoming battle, a kind expression floats on his face.

“I will the rest to you.”

“Yes, please leave it to me.”

With just that much of conversation, Sariel moves her pegasus with an aim towards the front lines.

The pegasus stands up like a long spear lining up, and calmly takes off.

The soldiers look at the lovely girl not fit to be on battlefield while catching their breaths.

Soon after, the soldiers start moving towards the frontlines.

Some steps behind was Maxwell armed with a large mace following them.

On his back, is a large white coffin larger than his back itself.

But as if not caring about its weight, Maxwell starts walking after Sariel in an intimidating manner.

Several steps in front of the front line, Sariel and Maxwell see the black demon race army standing in a line seeming like castle walls.

Looking at that scene, Sariel speaks in her normal manner without any hesitation.

“An army of demons...”

The voice of the slender Sariel is heard by both parties consisting of more than 35000 men clearly word by word.

“Our white God is generous.

However, the Evil Demon Dragon King must be condemned with death.

We will take the head of evil dragon. If you all swear to obey God, he will forgive you even if you're the demon races.”

As soon as she stopped speaking, a sudden wind blew through the Goldran Hills.

“I am the Daidalos Dragon King. Gaevinal.”

A jet black dragon leading a swarm of flying dragons flies down from midair.

From between the dragons, a dragon extending to 40 metres in stature flies down on his two legs in an intimidating manner.

Behind him spreads two dark wings seeming like a night sky with crescent moon, and his fat tail which looks like a large serpent strikes the ground.

Upon looking at his majestic appearance, the soldiers of the Crusaders gasped. The people who participated in the previous invasion are reminded of their unpleasant defeat and start to tremble.

“For the pitiful humans who worship the white God to taunt us, it really is unforgivable.”

The atmosphere begins trembling, and inside Gaevinal's mouth a large amount of magical power starts concentrating.

“Perish, humans.”

The inherent magic “Dragon Breath” that the dragons are so proud of and hides great destructive power.

An ominous dark red torrent of light is directed straight at Sariel.

“Light wing God’s Shield – Arulks.Aegis.”

The moment when they’re engulfed by the atrocious light, Maxwell sees the figure of Sariel being wrapped up in wings of an angel.

Zuzunn

Along with a thundering roar, a dense black smoke rises and covers the surrounding area.

Immediately a gust of wind blows away the smoke.

Beyond that stood Sariel in the same position from before with shining white body

“.....I’ll go.”

She speaks in small voice as always, Maxwell standing beside Sariel after seeing her defence magic block the attack. He replies in a strong voice while putting down the large coffin from his back.

“Your Excellency, may the fortune of war favor you!”

Sariel nods, and holds the coffin.

“‘Armed scriptures’ – Release.”

At that moment the the coffin is wrapped in a white light and scatters.

From within a long white spear in the imitation of the cross which is the symbol of God appears.”

“Holy Cross spear ‘Grand Cross’.”

The one of the two magical weapons only apostles can use are called “armed scriptures”.

The fact that the armed scripture is a spear proves that rather than a magician, Sariel’s true class is a Holy Knight Paladin.

The 7th Apostle Sariel takes the long pure white spear ‘The Holy Cross spear’ in her hands and storms towards Gaevinal on her pegasus

“o0000”

The roar of Gaevinal which trembles heaven and earth, signals the start of war.

Sariel cuts through the vanguard and storms, the 15000 Crusaders also march forward.

In contrast, the Daidalos army hailing Geavinal's roar, also starts the assault.

Here, the head on collision between the Daidalos army and the Crusaders opens its curtains.



Chapter 41 - Human and Demon

In the Pandora continent, other than Elf or Dwarf, Goblins, Orcs, Golems and other races similar to monsters also coexisted with the humans. But with the same appearance, those that lived according to their instincts like the stray goblins were categorized as monsters.

For the residents of Pandora, rather than appearance, the ability to understand others, intelligence, and reasoning was more important. But in the Arc continent ruled by humans, especially the region ruled by the church, 'whether you are human or not' was more important.

In the first place, even if it was the same human race, but their God was different, they would call each other heretics and start killing each other. If they didn't allow a different faith, permitting a totally different race was completely impossible for the current Church at least.

And thus the word [Demons] was born, a word that put monsters and different races together without any distinction.

For those who believed in the church, [Demons] were the same as monsters and had no problems in killing them. In fact they were happy to have killed the 'enemies of god'.

So, with this over discriminatory ideology, the Daidalos invasion was done half a year ago.

Officially, that was the first time the humans of Syncrea Republic fought with the demons of Daidalos.

But the battle between the 2000 knights and Daidalos defensive forces was not something that could be called a 'battle'. They were knights in name only. All they could think of was to cross the walls of Daidalos and take their gold for themselves. Truly a bandit-like thinking. Thus they underestimated the demons and therefore their attacking style was also similar to bandits.

But it was different this time.

With the Apostle and the Archbishop at the head, there was a proper chain of command and the soldiers under them were not people who had crossed the seas to earn riches but they were devout believers who were here to offer this land to their God as their duty.

Here onwards, the true strength of the army of the Syncrea Republic that controlled half of the Arc Continent was shown while fighting the demons.

In the sky, the 7th Apostle Sariel and the Dragon King Gaevinal faced each other, and on the ground, the 15,000 Crusaders clashed with the 20,000 man army of Daidalos.

“———Hold your formations!! Hold them until Her Excellency kills the evil dragon no matter what!!”(T/N:- Her excellency is used for Sariel here by Maxwell.)

Handing over the Armament Scripture and seeing off Sariel, Maxwell was fighting in the front row of the army.

The [Formation] the he spoke of was the tactics humans came up with to surpass the Demons.

Humans and Demons both used the same language, and fought wearing armour and swords in their hands.

But there was a clear distinction in the fighting style of the two.

The most striking distinction was seen during massive group battles like this time.

Demons who were fundamentally stronger in terms of physical ability as well as magical energy, put emphasis on individual strengths. During team battles that involved few number of people, some level of coordination was possible but in a group that had more than 100 people, they had no way to lead and command such a big army easily.

No, in the first place, fighting in such big groups was already beyond their way of thinking.

That is why, even Gaevinal who had built up a country, without trying to command his 20,000 subordinates, challenged Sariel to a one-on-one battle. Gaevinal who did not know humans other than those already living in the Pandora continent, thought that even humans would not find it abnormal.

That is because it was normal for the strongest to become king and during wars it was also normal for the Commanders to face-off each other in a one-on-one battle.

That is why he did not doubt the fact that Sariel was facing him alone.

But, in the world of humans where it was not necessary for the strongest to become the king, one-on-one battles were nothing more than a source of entertainment.

After all, for the commander who is meant to control the army to go and face the enemy commander alone was in no way logical. Because in human wars, the one who becomes the commander of the army is not the strongest but the one with the highest commanding abilities.

Of course, there are many generals who themselves are also strong but then they also have brilliant commanding capabilities as well.

Thus, though Sariel was the Supreme Commander of the Crusaders, for her to fight with the enemy commander after giving all commanding authority to the vice commander Liuchrome, was simply a clever strategy.

Whereas, the only directions the 20,000 man army had were – attack, defend and retreat, just those three.

Similar to this time, as long as the king gave the order to attack, all they had to do was just assault with full strength, and even though it's called assault, all they did was that every individual just charged towards the enemy.

The only time they will withdraw would be when either their king dies or they clearly become disadvantageous.

Basically, the battles done by demons depended on the individual strength of each soldier and that's it.

But, humans were not the same.

In this different world, magic existed, and beings like Sariel with overwhelming strength also existed.

But the rest was fundamentally similar to how things were in Kurono's original world.

Alone, humans had lesser strength than wild animals, but with wisdom and working in groups, they reached the top of the food chain.

Here, the culture may be at the level of Middle-ages, but the humans were similar to Kurono's original world. Strategy and tactics were used always.

So, the best one to battle huge numbers was to use [formations].

In the current battle, the reason why the Crusaders were able to deal with the attack of the Dem9ons who were stronger as well as had 5000 more soldiers, was due to the use and deployment of [formations] developed through heavy training and accurate commands.

“بـ يرس سد بيرز ال شعله عصام تقدة نار ث لاثاء” — Chanting complete, firing!”

“Now, do it!! Flame spear – Ignis Crisagita!!”

Standing in a single straight line, the troop of magicians wields their staffs and fire magic.

To buy time for them to complete the chants, they were protected by the soldiers wielding long spears.

The army of Daidalos was burnt with the simultaneous firing of the fire magic – Flame spear – Ignis Crisagita. On top of it, a rain of arrows was launched as a finishing blow.

“Shit! They are still alive! Those damned monsters!!”

Burnt with fire, stabbed with arrows, yet they swung their swords but they were finally killed after being pierced by the long-spear wielding soldiers.

Their incredible life force was clearly made visible, but still that was not enough to break through the solid defence of the united Crusaders.

In these front lines of the war, the Daidalos army was being suppressed by the [Square formation].

No matter which direction they are attacked from, they would be able to deal with it. Although it lacked mobility, it made up with the overwhelming defensive ability.

This square formation was made of spear troops, bow troops and the magic troops, these 3.

The spears used were Pikes that were 6m long pole type weapons which were used in the Arc continent as the Anti-cavalry weapon.

It was currently playing a major role in intercepting the Daidalos army infantry that showed assault strength similar to an actual heavy cavalry.

These spear troops were densely packed in the square along with Long Bow and cross bow users as well as long range magic users.

If Kurono had seen this deployed square, he would have thought that it was similar to the Spain Square. If these magic warriors were replaced with musketeers, it will be exactly same as the Spain square.

Of course, in a world where magic existed, magicians did not just replace musketeers with same strength but also possessed ability enhancing Boost magic and restorative Heal magic, truly an all-purpose support unit.

But still, even though the soldiers and magicians of the Crusaders were able to draw out their maximum strength and were fighting hard, they were still one-sidedly defending against the extremely powerful Daidalos army.

Even if demons were unaware of formations, against their individual strength and their larger numbers, even with the defensive strength of the square formation, holding them back temporarily was the most they could do.

“Lord Sarel, please grant upon us a miracle.....”

The Archbishop and the vice commander of the Crusaders, Liuchrome looked towards the sky where Sarel was in fight to the death with the Dragon King and quietly whispered.

Both Ars and Liuchrome had liberated an area at the border of the Syncrea Republic where Heretics had run rampant once. That achievement was recognised, and Ars became Cardinal and he became an Archbishop at a very young age.

The experience of attaining victory against heretics of Liuchrome was clearly seen in this battle against these demons as well. But even with experience and brilliant commanding skills along with the elite 15,000 Crusaders, Liuchrome was still did not have the strength to win against the immense strength of the Daidalos army.

To lead the Crusaders to victory, it was necessary to slay the commander of Daidalos, the Dragon King Gaevinal.

The Crusaders were currently struggling, no, they were inferior. The one able to overturn this condition was only Sarel, and again the only one who could face the dragon king alone was only the 7th Apostle Sarel.

Will the Crusaders achieve glorious victory or will they face a tragic loss, what will be their fate, all had been entrusted to the small white girl called Sariel.



Chapter 42 - Apostle vs. Dragon

At the hill of Goldran currently, the Crusaders were barely holding against the Daidalos army by deploying square formations at the ground, and in the air the Pegasus knights were holding down the flying dragon troops.

And even above the sky where the Pegasus knights were fighting dragons, far above the clouds, the 7th Apostle and the Dragon King were facing off against each other.

Under the sunlight existed the clear blue sky but only above Goldran hill, the sky was burning in black and white.

“oooooooo!!!”

Dark red, sinister light of destruction, Gaevinal’s Dragon Breath burnt the air.

“[Light wing god’s shield – Alarux Aegis]”

The wings of angel holding white shine covered Sariel and stopped the nth breath once again.

The Heaven-class secret skill that surpassed the highest advance magic rank – [God’s shield – Aegis] was able to take on almost any magic used by humans without getting damaged at all.

But taking the breath of the giant black dragon head-on countless times, it was finally destroyed.

“[Sonic Walker]”

Before the breath could reach her, Sariel jumped above from the Pegasus she was riding.

Even though she should have started free falling, she clearly stepped on the air.

Sariel ran in the sky. Closing on to the dragon king while releasing the silver aura at full strength, she looked like a meteor.

This speed that could not be even seen by normal eyes and advancing threateningly in mid air was the effect of Sage-class martial art [Sonic Walker].

But Gaevinal's burning red eyes could clearly catch her figure that was closing in.

He swung his giant tail towards her. Although it was a simple movement, but that tail was similar to a moving castle wall.

The tail that was covered with scales, that were considered the hardest among all living things, was harder than an actual rampart.

If that tail was swung like a whip at the speed of sound, how many magicians would it take to cast enough defensive magic to stop something like that?

Moving at high-speed in mid-air, Sariel focused all her magical energy and concentration on the coming attack. Using the [God's shield Aegis] again was not possible. So she decided to make use of her speed to evade it.

The incoming hard attack was seen through with the help of over enhanced dynamic vision and sixth-sense that had become closer to foresight.

The storm-like destructive tail passed through the place where Sariel's lower body was before she moved.

As her silver hair fluttered she evaded the attack and then shortened the distance between them. In response, Gaevinal had already moved to his next attack.

Large claws that were bigger than any sword attacked Sariel.

Holding unbelievable sharpness that could rip apart the body with the touch of his fingertips, those claws were not only hard and sharp but were clearly also infused with an Extra magic that increased the attack range. But, Sariel dodged it with a paper thin difference. Gaevinal had clearly ended up allowing her to come close to his bosom. At last, he had come in range of Sariel's holy cross spear – Grand Cross.

“[Moonlight – Lunalux]”

Physical strength, magical energy, concentration power, enhancing every ability to the highest with [Faust Berserk], and then enhancing them even further with [Lunalux].

Invocation time is a mere 1 second but it uses up energy even more than 10 normal magicians combined instantly. And, in the instant the magical energy is used, Sariel released her attack that could be literally said to be her sure-kill move, a move only those who could use a part of 'God' can utilise, the ultimate martial art.

“—[God's Spear – Brionac.]”

From the point of the Grand Cross, dazzling white light overflowed.

That light was divine and beautiful, yet it had the same level of destruction quality as the dragon breath.

The [Brionac] released by Sariel with her full strength, its edge that was shining with white light aim was the heart of the dragon.

Uptill now, no matter which shield or wall it was faced with, the God's spear had pierced through but at this moment, it lost the title of 'sure-kill move'.

(“Hard—can't pierce through any further——“)

The scales that were called the hardest, the steel like flesh, and the carious divine protections as the Dragon King; the [Brionac] pierced through it all yet at the end it could not reach the heart.

Pulling out the spear, before blood could burst through that wound,

“Gooaaaah!!!”

“nn——“

Due to Gaevinal's giant roar, Sariel's small body was blown away like a leaf.

Thrown away in mid air, Sariel quickly corrected her stance and as if she was already waiting for it, she landed on the Pegasus.

Sariel rode on her Pegasus and Gaevinal had blood flowing from his chest. Both took distance from each other again.

“To have been able to inflict an injury upon me.....human girl, name yourself.”

With just Gaevinal’s words, the air trembled. Any feeble person would have instantly fainted with just that.

Sariel, even under that pressure, remained expressionless and answered.

“7th Apostle Sariel.”

Similar to how she had once named herself in front of Kurono.

“Hou, the same name as the ancient angel of god? You have a strong light as your name suggests as well——“

Taking a deep breath, and at the same time, the bleeding from the chest stopped, and the wound quickly closed up.

“Sariel, you are someone worthy of being my opponent in a long time. From here onwards, I shall also use my full strength——“

Acknowledging Sariel as someone worthy of fighting against with all his strength, Gaevinal released a tremendous roar.

And then, on the scales as black as the night itself, red lines started to appear. His dark body was coloured with sinister red lines and Gaevinal released magical energy, vitality, fighting spirit, and thirst for blood —— Powers that could be felt directly with the body, everything had been doubled and become thicker.

Even Sariel, faced with that enormous presence, her beautiful thin eyebrows turned into a scowl.

(“I might die.....”)

How many years has it been, Sariel thought to herself.

From the moment she started taking experiments to become an ‘Apostle’, she had lost the feeling of death.

But, numerous modifications, enhancements, at the end of experiments, she had finally become an Apostle worthy of having the divine protection of the White God, and from that moment onwards, she had become an existence like a ‘dragon’, far away from death.

As the 7th Apostle, Sariel had participated in numerous wars, disputes, rebellions in the Arc continent.

But as the strongest existence of the church, an [Apostle], Sariel faced no opponent that could actually threaten her life.

When she was ambushed, made to retreat, betrayed by allies, surrounded by enemies on all sides, in every setting where the army would resolve for death, Sariel never thought that she would die.

An Apostle was such a transcendental existence.

But right now, at this moment, Sariel felt death. The black-red dragon king in front of her was stronger than any enemy she had ever faced.

Even if she won, how many wounds would she take? Maybe she might become unable to fight ever again.

But still, without any fear, she set up her spear.

For her, death was not the absolute fear.

After all, she had abandoned something like survival instincts a long time ago. She had no attachments to this world. All she had was the 'duty' to complete as an Apostle.

That was her *raison d'être*.

Thus even if she was slaughtered by the dragon king here, even if she didn't have enough strength, she did not care about anything else.

As long as she was alive, she would fulfil her duty as an Apostle.

".....En Garde."

Hardening her resolve, Sariel faced Gaevinal in his true form——

"Come, human with the name of an Angel!"

And thus the battle between the two strongest existences had begun.

Chapter 43 - The Dragon Slaying Angel

——This is it.

Liuchrome who was commanding the battle instinctually realized.

Although the front line had yet to collapse, Liuchrome had already received reports that many square formations had been destroyed.

Up till now, before a square formation got destroyed, Liuchrome would send reserve soldiers that were waiting in the rear to prevent it from happening. But now even that reserve had become empty. Only the heavy cavalry unit required in the 'final push' was left to him.

Liuchrome was not stupid enough to haphazardly send the cavalry. If it was for assault he would have considered but it was defence. Using cavalry for retreating was basically using the troops in exactly opposite of their actual forte.

Heavy cavalry who are clad in full plate armour are an extremely powerful troop. On top of it they were the elites of the Temple Knights. Their ability was not to be doubted.

But, cavalry's biggest strong point is mobility and offensive ability. For example, when the opponent is at a disadvantageous position, if they have to intercept a charge from the flank by the cavalry as well, the enemy would be definitely slaughtered. Basically, if you use Cavalry with accurate timing, you could achieve victory instantly.

But, if the timing is messed up instead, the losses will not be laughable.

And if they were destroyed once, they didn't have any reserves for them either.

The horses they use along with their armour, compared to a soldier, the cost and time incurred to raise one cannot be even compared with each other.

Neither are they useful only in certain situations but they are also too valuable to use recklessly.

Thus, every famous commander in the history of the Arc continent read the flow of the battlefield first and then used these troops to display their maximum strength.

Liuchrome was not as talented as those famous commanders, but he knew the usability of each troop and did not lose calm when faced with a disadvantageous situation.

His outer appearance was certainly unique, but inside he was rational, and someone who could take calm and reliable decisions. That is why Ars chose him from among all his subordinates because he believed that Liuchrome could deliver the desired result.

And now, Liuchrome had realized faster than anyone else that if the current flow continued, the Crusaders would be definitely annihilated.

Therefore, before he has to face the worst situation, he decided it would be better to retreat for now.

To order the Crusaders, who are here to fulfil the will of god, was not an easy task for a mediocre commander at all.

They cannot step back, neither they had any plans, thus there was no choice but sacrifice the Crusaders while wishing the God for a miracle. A mediocre commander could only take the above action.

And then God will grant a miracle to such a fool with a heart full of compassion; Liuchrome understood that such a thing would never happen.

A miracle is called a miracle because it is not meant to happen. Depending on such things was the same as accepting defeat from the start, Liuchrome thought so from the very bottom of his heart. That is why the ones who lead an army to victory were none other than the humans themselves that were fighting there.

And in such a position where they were about to lose, it was his duty to save as many soldiers as possible. Liuchrome was about to order the retreat, at that very moment,

GU00000000——

With a roar able to shake the heavens, a giant black object fell from the skies.

It was crashing directly near the front lines where both the armies were clashing.

At this moment both armies stopped their hands and quickly ran in all directions in order to save themselves.

The thing that was falling finally crashed on the Goldran hill that was already painted with blood.

It's identity was known by everyone here, but they did not realize it until it had actually fallen to the ground.

It was a giant black dragon.

The wings that could create a storm with just flapping were torn to pieces, the feet that made the earth tremble and the hands which had claws that could cut through anything had been completely severed from the body and incredible wounds could be seen.

The tail that was like the wall of a castle had also been severed and was nowhere to be found, the fortress like body itself was filled with places where the scales had been destroyed or torn off and the whole body was stained with blood.

And the burning fire-like eyes had less shine than a worn out ruby. Everyone there understood that the life of this giant body was running out.

The thing that had fallen from the skies was none other than the corpse of Dragon King Gaevinal.

Nobody noticed that on the forehead of this giant dragon king's body, a single shadow was there.

A cross spear that had penetrated deeply into the forehead, and the one who held it was a girl wearing a bloodstained robe.

It had become so dark red in colour that it was unknown whether it was due to blood spurts or was it her own blood. Her beautiful silver hair was also covered in red and had lost its original splendour. She was missing her right arm and maybe because her right eye had been crushed, it was closed as tears of blood flowed down.

But, she was clearly standing while sticking the spear in the corpse of the dragon king. The open left eye held a brilliant red shine and showed that she was still alive.

The girl was Sariel.

Each every one that fought here witnessed the legend of a single human defeating a dragon born in front of them.

“—It’s an Angel.”

Someone muttered.

“The Angel defeated the dragon.”

Angel, there were various explanations about their identity but the words that had been raised here was the common belief of everyone standing here.

“Aah, how beautiful.”

Wet with blood and entrails, having lost the right arm and right eye, even then, the figure of the girl firmly holding the spear in her hands was to each and every soldier of the Crusaders, the most beautiful thing that they had ever seen.

A scene so vivid, that they would never ever forget it in their whole lives.

But, for the Daidalos army what did the girl look like, at least, it was not the same as the Crusaders.

Sariel defeated Gaevinal, that incredibly unbelievable fact was understood by each and every one on the Goldran hill.

But the feeling they held in their hearts was not excitement of being able to see a legend; it was the shock of the death of the unparalleled dragon.

In either case, it was big enough to make all of them forget to even move.

And the one who recovered the fastest among them was Liuchrome.

Facing the dazed subordinates standing there, he raised his voice and proclaimed thus,

“Behold! The great 7th Apostle Her Excellency Sariel has slain the evil Dragon King! Now is the time, when we shall annihilate the evil army of demons! All troops attack!!”

The order of attack made by Liuchrome clearly resounded. Confident of their victory, the Crusaders picked up their weapons, shouted, and charged. They faced the Daidalos army that had completely lost their fighting spirit in front of the fact that the undefeatable dragon king had been killed.

“Hurry, rescue Her Excellency Sariel. Also, give the first heavy cavalry unit to attack—”

At last the moment of reversal had come. This was the only time when their less numbered army could annihilate the strong Daidalos army. With this in his mind, Liuchrome quickly gave out orders one after another.

Currently, the difference between the numbers of soldiers between the two armies on the Goldran hill, compared to the start, was in the same ratio. In fact, due to maintaining the formations, the Crusaders were at a disadvantage.

Although the enemy had lost their commander, if they instantly counter attacked, it will turn into a battle of attrition and in the end, the Crusaders would lose.

But, at this moment, it was a situation where the difference in morale would decide the outcome.

The Crusaders who were about to lose their front line, regained their spirit and confidence in victory with Sariel’s accomplishment, and launched a counter attack.

And what Liuchrome was aiming for was the realisation of the tactic, known in the warring states period as [Norikiri]. (T/N: Norikiri is a tactic where units of five to ten horsemen rode into the enemy to stir confusion)

Launching the cavalry against the restless enemy, it was a tactic meant to quickly destroy them, the easiest to use as well as the most reliable tactic.

And this was the only time where the much awaited [Norikiri] could be used.

Against this, the Daidalos army who had been unable to regain their fighting spirit had fallen into confusion.

Losing their king, whether to fight, to run, or to retreat; they were unable to take any of those decisions were faced with the Crusaders that were in the best form now.

And finally, the silver heavy cavalry troop that had received enhancement support from the magicians began their lance charge to decide the outcome of this battle.

In front of the white army, unable to do nothing more than individually try and defend themselves, the fate of the Daidalos army had been decided.

This battle that would be later known as the Battle of Goldran, ended with the magnificent victory of the Crusaders.

Three days later, on the 10th day of the month of Enrai (Distant Thunder), the Crusaders completely captured the capital Daidalos.

Chapter 44 - Meeting of Apostles

The church headquarters, [Holy Elysion Cathedral], was located in the holy city Elysion. In its deepest part, where a conference room exclusively for high ranking clergymen was made, out of 12, 6 Apostles had gathered.

There were Apostles that stayed and served in Elysion as well as those that were deployed to far away fronts like Sarii. Thus it was rare for all 12 to assemble at the same time. At the same time, that also implied that war never ended on this Arc continent.

The Apostles that had gathered today were the 2nd and 5th, that resided in Elysion, as well as the 3rd, 4th, 11th, and 12th, who had just returned.

“——The conquest of Pandora continent, will be continued to be entrusted to the 7th Apostle Sarii.”

The one who was acting as the speaker of this meeting, the 2nd Apostle Abel, declared this.

With the magnificent victory of the Crusaders at Goldran, every noble and church had started sending reinforcements there. Still, Abel declared that they will not be sending another Apostle there.

“You seem displeased, 11th Apostle Lord Misa.”

Sensing everyone’s reactions, Abel spoke to Misa who clearly seemed dissatisfied.

“Sarii was seriously injured while fighting that dragon called Gaevinal right? And it will take time to restore the destroyed parts, not to mention that it’ll take at least one month if she sleeps in the [coffin].”

Out of all the apostles gathered here, Abel and 3 others were dressed in clothes that hid their faces and barely showed any skin. But Misa’s attire, let alone the face, even the shoulders and legs were clearly exposed from the modified robe that she wore.

Misa had a cute face which still retained its youthfulness, a face that would suit a 17yr old bishoujo. From the point of view of the strict clergy, the high exposure level of her body would have been rage inducing, and the modified robe further highlighted her beautiful feminine body line to top it off.

From the tiara worn on her light pink hair, her whole body was decorated with shining ornaments, but rather than making her look overly dressed up, they only supported her sublime beauty. In fact, the shine of the numerous jewels seemed to be overshadowed in front her.

“I agree. Being unable to move for 1 month would be dangerous for both Lord Sarel and the Crusaders as well.”

After Misa’s words, 12th Apostle Mariabelle also spoke.

She was also not wearing dresses that hid the face like Misa. With blonde hair and blue eyes similar to his older brother Archbishop Liuchrome, he possessed beauty that could make someone mistake him for a young girl. However, his long straight hair different from his brother’s natural wavy hair was worth mentioning as well.

“Certainly, if another army possessing strength equal to that of Gaevinal’s were to attack, the Crusaders would definitely be annihilated. But, such level of opposition has not yet been confirmed. Also we are talking about the cautious Archbishop Liuchrome here; he won’t try something stupid as launching another attack without proper plans from Daidalos. And above all, currently reinforcements are being sent one after the other to Pandora, the military would soon be restored to its full strength.”

“Reinforcements, is it? Are you not perhaps mistaking thirsty hyenas for reinforcements?”

“You are taking your words too far, 11th Apostle Lord Misa.”(abel)

Abel warned her a little, but, Misa didn’t show any signs of remorse.

“You should also know that they are nothing more than a group of thieves who are blinded by greed; they are simply scum who take pleasure in looting and massacring. They won’t make up for a good fighting force.”

Although Misa scorned the reinforcements from the church and the nobles that had been given the name of Crusaders as well, Abel also understood her opinion so decided not to object it anymore.

“Lord Misa, although I can’t fully accept your opinion, even I don’t think that these reinforcements would obediently listen to our orders. My brother is a brilliant commander on top of being a clergyman but, to keep such a large number of people in control, the power of an Apostle is necessary.”(mariabelle)

Even though these two had been clearly against the decision, Abel showed no signs of changing his decision.

“Both of your opinions have truth in them, but I still cannot authorize the deployment of an Apostle. Currently, the power required to conquer the whole Pandora continent has been secured. Certainly, the ones going to Pandora are the private armies of nobles and the church, and looting will also occur obviously, there would be even many fights among themselves over fortunes as well. But still, the numbers accumulated are more than enough to conquer Pandora. The only problem left is how to ‘divide the cake’. Such pointless battles are not something us Apostles need to take part in.”

An Apostle is given power to destroy the enemies of god.

Thus, there was no meaning in obtaining fame and wealth. Simply destroying the enemy was their *raison d'être*. If there is no enemy to defeat, then there is no meaning for an Apostle to be there.

The Pandora continent did not have any more areas with strength that might require the intervention of more Apostles.

Even if they were like robbers, both the parliament and the church believe that they should just conquer it with overwhelming numbers.

In fact, the number of applicants was big enough to make the strength in Arc continent to become insufficient.

If there is going to be a shortage in the Republic due to the army driven by greed, then the Apostles will have to protect the peace here.

“The wounded Lord Sariel will certainly take about 1 month to recuperate but, since there are no threats there is no need for her to take any hardships either. All she has to do is just stay there as the supreme commander of the Crusaders. There would be no problem even if she doesn’t move.”

“But—“

Before Misa could raise her voice in objection again, the sound of hands striking with a *pan* sound interrupted her.

“ufufu, if you are that worried about Sariel-chan then how about we go and meet her.”

As if suggesting visiting a friend, the one who spoke in this gentle voice was the 3rd Apostle Mikael.

With wavy platinum-blond super long hair, just looking at her gentle gaze with amethyst like eyes, gave a sense of relief and calmness.

She had an overwhelmingly huge chest, slender neck, round hips and long plump legs. A voluptuous body line, which could be clearly seen even from above the pure white habit that she wore.

Her figure overflowed with loveliness, and everyone who saw her felt that she gave off the divine feeling similar to the goddess of harvest of ancient times or the mother earth herself.

Mikael, thinking that she just gave a great idea, with a smiling face, looked beautiful and neat worthy of being called the [Holy woman].

“Wait, I wasn’t particularly worried about Sariel but——”(misa)

“I approve. If you are not worried then Lord Misa can stay here. It will be less noisy so I’m actually happy about it.”(mariabelle)

“Wh, Who said I was not going!? I was just worried as her eternal rival whether her skills had fallen or not! That’s it!”(misa)

Battles and fights between Apostles were forbidden but looking at Misa it only felt like a children’s fight, so Abel decided not to say anything.

“In the first place, Mariabelle doesn’t have any significant relationship with Sariel right?”(misa)

“Don’t say my name so familiarly, and what do you mean by I don’t have any relationship, huh!?”(mariabelle)

“I am her rival; you’re just a fellow Apostle.”(misa)

“Are you kidding me, that’s not——”(mariabelle)

True, was something he couldn’t say in the end. He held abnormal feelings for Sariel but, that doesn’t mean he had any special relationship with her.

Once, he had entered a battle led by Ars, who had yet to become a Cardinal, along with his brother Liuchrome to fight against heretics.

In that battle, the Apostle dispatched by the church was Sarel.

No matter how you looked at it she was just a comrade-in-arms. In the first place, if you can call her a comrade just by fighting together once, then all 15,000 Crusaders were also her comrades.

“No way.....I am.....”(T/N: Mariabelle uses boku to refer to himself.)

“fufun” (misa)

Mariabelle was worried about his one-sided feelings, and for some reason Misa looked as if she had won something.

“This is the first time I’m going to the Pandora continent. I wonder what kind of place it is?”

Mikael was in her own pace, already in a travelling mood.

Looking at these three, Abel made tired face. Although his face couldn’t really be seen since he was wearing the hood.

“—Anyway, I won’t forbid personally going to meet Lord Sarel, all of you act as per your own judgement. With this the discussion is over. Disperse.”

After giving the dispersal order, Abel stood up from his seat.

Since he had said what he wanted to say, he had no reason to stay here anymore. Mikael, Misa, and Mariabelle can do whatever they want.

The 4th and the 5th Apostle who had been quiet from the start till end, also stood up. The silver knight dressed in armor from head to toe was the 5thApostle Johann

He was the commander of the [Temple Knights] to which the 1st cavalry unit, that dealt the finishing blow to the Daidalos army during the skirmish at Goldran, were affiliated to.

The 2m tall body covered in full body armour sitting on the chair looked like a piece of art.

The other, wearing a robe similar to Abel and a hood that was even thicker through which no expression could be seen, was 4th Apostle Judah.

Nobody knew what his work was, and Apostles below the number 5, let alone his powers, did not even know how he actually looked like. He was an extremely mysterious person.

The 2nd, 4th, and 5th Apostle whose faces could not be seen soon left, and the three who wanted to meet Sariel were left.

The scene of Mikael looking at Misa and Mariabelle, who were quarrelling, with saint like smile, was like a teacher looking at her troublesome pupils.

The Daidalos royal castle that was even enormous than the Virginia fort, in one section of this castle was a special room.

Originally, it was a giant basement warehouse, but currently a large magic circle was drawn on the cold stone ground, and priest in white robes stood at the four corners. And in the centre was pure white coffin.

One month after this room was created after the occupation of Daidalos. The light of the light illuminating the inside of the room slowly flickered. Other than the occasional tired sighs of the priests that were using magic continuously in rotation, there was no other sound inside the room. But at this moment, the change they were waiting for finally occurred.

—*bashari*

The sound of water came from inside the coffin.

basha *basha* the sound of water striking and moving came twice, thrice. The 4 priests made sure that they were not hallucinating due to overworking themselves.

Quickly as the priests left the room, 2 sisters entered the room to replace them.

One of them held a towel, and the other held a robe. Both things were pure white without a single stain.

As the two of them came closer, the door of the coffin was opened.

Two white arms came out. The hands gripped the coffin and slowly raised the body.

The naked body of the girl wet with the holy water kept in the coffin appeared.

Drops of water fell from the long silver hair; the two red eyes opened, and looked at the 2 sisters in front of her.

The 2 sisters were supposed to call out to the girl who came out of the coffin first, but this was the first time the two of them had ever seen the girl directly and forgot their own duty due to the beauty that was loved by God and had their breath taken away.

What they saw was the unwounded naked body of the white girl.

After the fight with Gaevinal, the 7th Apostle Sariel had supposedly lost an arm and had sustained major wounds, but there was not even a single scar on her body right now. In this one month, inside the coffin filled with holy water, Sariel's wounds had been completely healed.

".....How long was I passed out?"

Sariel asked.

It was her usual small voice, but that was enough for the two sisters to regain their composure.

"Today is the 12th day of the month of New Sun (Shinyou). It has been 36 days since you slept."

"I see."

She listened to the current state of affairs from the sister with the robe as her body was dried by the sister with the towel.

"It seems a bit troublesome situation."

"Yes, not long ago, the prime minister of Daidalos committed suicide in the throne room——"

Listening to the sister, she wore the robe and became the usual pure white figure.

"Now then, Archbishop Liuchrome is waiting for you, please come this way."

The sister starts leading her there.

And Sariel's footsteps, which were following the sister, were steady enough that no one would think that she was asleep for a month."

("My body is stiff.....right arm cannot be used for atleast one week in battle.")

As she felt the inconsistencies in her body, she decided to go outside the castle for rehabilitation and inspection.

Kuro No Maou

- Volume 4 -

Omen of Destruction

Chapter 45 - Prologue of the Moonlit Night

15th of the month of spring water (Shimizu). Once again I gaze at the full moon in the sky all alone.

I had been alone till now, and I will stay alone forever.

That's fine. If I can stay as a child, I won't feel pain, I won't feel bitter, I won't feel lonely, nobody would resent me, I'll forget everything and live on.

But, that was the last time I saw the full moon alone.

I will never forget, on the 4th of the month of early-summer breeze (Ryokufuu), I had a fateful encounter.

"My name is Kurono Maou, you are?"

I won't be alone ever again.

If I stayed like a child it won't be painful? It won't hurt? It won't be lonely? It won't be sad?

It was all a lie.

It was simply just a deception, fooling myself, deceiving myself, acting like I didn't notice.....

But, all that doesn't matter anymore.

The past doesn't matter anymore. Everything doesn't matter anymore.

Because——

"Aah, as long as I have Lily, I can keep living in this world, I won't be lonely."

The same feelings as myself.

You, as long as you are by my side, I can keep on living, I won't be lonely.

I won't return to the past again, I won't return to being lonely again, because you are with me.

Yes, that's why, all the world needs is just you and me.

Everything else is, now, not needed.



Chapter 46 - The Secret of the Apple Box

I always had a doubt from the time I started living in Irz Village as an adventurer.

That doubt goes back to the day I met Lily for the first time.

Thanks to Lily throwing water on my face, I woke up and found myself in the middle of the forest. After that is all as we know it but, what's important is the part before this. Just how did I end up in Fairy Garden?

I had smuggled myself inside a box filled with apples (actually a similar fruit) at the port town of the Arc continent. The box that I had sneaked in was, along with the other goods, crammed into the ship's hatch and left on a 1 week long voyage.

Inside the cramped box, all I could do was sleep, eat the fruits and develop my black magic.

During this development time, I came up with [load] and [shadow space] like convenient magics.

But, inside the swaying ship, closed inside a small box, unable to move even a bit, was not going to be a comfortable trip.

The only reason I was fine was of course, thanks to the super body gained with the modifications that allowed me to easily live for 1 month without eating or drinking.

I wasn't hungry much and had too much free time, and the just fact that I was not in that facility anymore, made it feel like a much better environment.

And the last thing I remember inside the apple box was about 7 days after departure.

Becoming sleepy, I immersed my own body inside the already perfected shadow space except the face. The shadow space contains magic but no air so I had to keep at least my face outside to avoid suffocating.

If someone looked from the side they'll see only the eerie sight of a single face floating, but to sleep while spreading my legs inside that small box, it was the easiest method.

In fact, it felt neither cold nor hot, and did not even feel the swaying of the ship either so it was really comfortable. Moreover, if I submerged my ears as well then it also became sound proof since sound did not pass through it.

Thinking back now, disconnecting almost my whole body from the outside through the use of Shadow space might be the biggest reason I had no idea whatever happened to me after that.

And before I realized it I was inside the forest.

Yes, the doubt I had was to know just what happened that led to me ending up there.

At first I thought that it went something like this- The ship reached the port normally, goods unloaded, transport by land route, and in the middle, fallen from a cliff and inside the forest.

But that ship belonged to Arc continent, no, to be precise, it belonged to the Syncrea Republic, a country of humans.

The destination of the ship should have been the base built for invasion of the Pandora Continent, i.e. Virginia.

But, Virginia was being pushed back by the Daidalos army. So just how did a human bring the box this inland.

That box should have been a part of the resupply goods meant for Virginia. It should have been consumed in Virginia and should have no reason to go any further.

In the first place, even if someone could carry it till here, humans were not even allowed to get of Virginia currently.

A contradiction originated here. A box meant to be in Virginia was currently in Fairy Garden, far east of Virginia.

The owner of the box, i.e. humans, cannot have carried it till here, then, who was the one that carried it till here?

It might seem like question that could make someone lose his sleep from anxiety, but the answer, the identity of the being that carried it cleared it easily.

“A garuda, was it the one behind it?”

On one of the hills making up the Gallahad mountain range, at its summit existed a garuda nest.

I am currently, to complete a special quest, in the middle of infiltrating this nest along with Lily.

If at the top most point, a suspiciously big cave exists, then it would be a garuda's nest. Was that cave naturally made or was it dug by the garuda, I didn't know. But it was definitely an amazing cave with a height of around 10m.

Inside that giant cave, within the stash of shining items and prey collected by the Garuda like a crow, I had found a thing similar to the apple box I had snuck in.

Within my range, I can see two apple boxes. In the surroundings there are also broken similar boxes as well.

Looking at all these things, I thought and inferred.

A Garuda that can fly long distances with ease, discovered a ship of the Republic on the sea.

Whether it was simply on a whim or it had planned all along, Garuda attacked the transport ship and took large amounts of apple boxes with it.

And among those boxes was the one I was in.

To think that I didn't realise anything even when this monster bird attacked the whole ship. The isolation abilities of shadow space are really fearsome.

I flew along with the Garuda in skies of Pandora while in deep sleep.

And, by chance, the box I was in fell and landed in Fairy Garden, the place I met Lily.

"aah, I feel a bit refreshed now—"

Oops! Now's not the time to be relieved by solving my doubts.

We came here for a specific reason. Work, I need to work.

"Lily, go search there, I'll search that way."

“Ye～s”

I and Lily were adventurers as a pair.

At first, we did only the quest of collecting medicinal herbs together, and actually Lily thought that we could make do with just the money received from the sales. But, now she accompanied me in every quest and we were now making a living out of adventurer work.

Although I didn't want to make Lily take part in the dangerous adventurer life style, that full moon night, the girl-form Lily wanted to become an adventurer along with me and didn't listen to me at all, so now we worked as a pair.

Talking with her all night, that was not the only thing we decided upon. The other important decision was —

“Kurono～found it～”

“ooh, nice Lily!”

Decorated with various shining jewels, Lily held up one shining sword.

But that treasured sword was also overshadowed in front of the fully dressed up fairy Lily.

Yes, the other important decision was to make Lily wear clothes.

It was not because of me that she stayed always naked, it was normal for a fairy after all, but the girl Lily needed them so it became like this.

The black one piece that covered her body was a great match with her radiant white skin.

No, well, I think Lily would look cute in t-shirt and jeans as well though.

By the way, for adventurers, clothes were meant as an important type protection for the body. But, Lily's current clothes were simply meant to be cute.

In the first place, Lily whose default appearance was being fully nude, possessed an extremely strong defensive shield type Extra magic called [fairy barrier – Oracle Shield]. So unless it was something truly amazing, armour would become a hindrance to her instead.

By the way, the sphere of light that covered the original fairies during the time I met Lily was Oracle Shield.

But, even for a beginner adventurer, armour or protective armaments were something they needed to be particular about.

So, I searched for a suitable item for Lily to wear.

And the thing that caught my eye was a fabric called [Ancient Velvet] being sold by a certain merchant. The touch and polish, both were splendid and on top of it, it was infused with a strong defensive magic as well. It was really a high-class magic item.

Speaking of its cost, it was much higher than all my savings I had diligently accumulated till now.

Well, it's obvious that it was out of reach for a newbie adventurer like me.

Normally, it was enough to make me give up, but this merchant had some certain circumstances.

"The treasured sword passed down from generation to generation in our family was stolen away by a garuda!"

That's what it was.

The request for recovery was filed in the guild but nobody seemed to accept it. Even private contractors, would not go face a monster that had been classed at rank 4.

He wanted to recover it as fast as possible but there was nothing he could do.

Although I felt bad for the misfortunate merchant, this was a chance for me. If I could complete the request, I could receive the high class good Ancient Velvet as reward.

As a result I accepted the request on the condition that there will be no advance payment, no payment for losses, and the reward will be given only when the request is completed.

Although he didn't really believe a rank 1 adventurer like me, but from his point of view he was at zero disadvantage since there was no advance nor need to cover for losses. So he had no reason to refuse me either.

Thus, I took one my very first private request not affiliated with the guild.

“Anyway, with this, the request is complete.”

Well, we were attacked along the way here by monsters but thanks to Lily finding it quickly, we were able to finish it without having to face the garuda.

Uptill now, with the exception of Sariel, the strongest opponent I had faced during the experiments was a [Firedrake – Salamander].

I got my whole body burned as well as had my left arm and stomach torn and eaten but I was somehow able to defeat it in the end. It was a rank 4 monster as well.

Compared to then, my control over black magic has gotten much better, and now I also have good equipment, so if I faced it now, although I might take serious injuries, I should be able to defeat it without dying.

Therefore, a garuda of the same rank 4, even if I ended up fighting it, even in the worst case I should be able to defeat it by relying on Lily’s support.

But that’s only something I could do. Since, the request does not require me to kill the garuda I’ll avoid confrontation no matter what.

Above all else, I don’t want Lily to get injured.

“Now then, before the master of this place returns——“

We should return. The moment I was about to say that, a shrill cry resounded.

Outside the cave, in the sky spreading beyond it, a small black spot appeared.

As that black spot came closer this way, it clearly became a bird like silhouette. The whole body was black, with ornamental feathers sticking on its head and tail, it had a figure that reminded of an eagle.

But, it was too big for a normal eagle.

“oh shit.....”

Of course, that giant shadow was the monster bird garuda.

And this was the garuda's nest. It even had eggs bigger than Lily here.

From the garuda's point of view, we were nothing more than egg stealers.

"KYOEEEEEE!!!"

While releasing terrific anger, the Garuda approached us at ultra high speed.

Shit! Even though I thought we finished it without any problems.

"Run!"

"Un!"

I threw the objective treasured sword inside the shadow space; At least I won't lose it or drop it now.

Before the garuda can reach here, I grabbed Lily and threw myself directly in the air from the cave.

"I'm counting on you Lily!"

I joined hands with Lily, and I dangled in mid air.

"eeeeei!!"

Lily released her usual cute shout and at the same time my body felt like it was floating a bit.

"nn~~!"

Lily's shining wings spread out even more than usual.

She is able to fly even while holding me. Lily's wings aren't just for show after all. Aah I can experience flying like this at least once.

But, Lily who was not a full fairy, doesn't have the ability to fly all day long, neither can she fly at high speeds.

"Lily, hang on for just a little bit more!"

"un!"

It was an incomplete flying ability, yet Lily persistently kept flying while holding me.

No, rather flying, it should be called gently falling, but still I can understand her brave efforts.

The lush green forest below, little by little came closer.

The cave where the garuda's nest was, had now become far above us, as we had fallen quite a lot of distance.

At this height, I should be fine probably---

"Thanks Lily, it's fine now."

"Kurono--"

I released Lily's hands and started to free fall.

Lily looked at the falling me with a worried face but I was instead worried about her.

In the worst case, even if both my arms broke from the fall, if it's this body, it'll fix up somehow.

"But, maybe it was bit too high....."

In the middle of the few seconds, I felt a bit of regret, and I crashed into the green trees.

"Ouch--"

While breaking branches one after the other, I fell towards the ground.

I thought that the fall would be broken a bit by the trees, but is there even any effect?

In a matter of seconds, a lot useless thoughts go through my head, and I finally crashed to the ground.

"Guh!!"

Somehow fixing my posture, I land with my feet. The shock ran through my body to my head.

“ma, made it somehow.....”

My feet sank into the ground a bit though. But that's it. I can't feel any abnormality in my feet. I once again thanked my over sturdy body and sprawled down on the ground

“Kurono〜”

From the skies an angel, no, Lily's voice came to me.

With her wings shining, she leaped onto my chest.

“Are you okay?”

“I'm fine. No problem. Is the Garuda coming after us?”

“No, it isn't.”

Thank god. Since we didn't lay our hands on the eggs, I figured it won't chase us if ran away quickly. As expected, it let us go.

“Alright, since the request has been completed, let's return quickly.”

“Yes!”

While holding Lily in my arms, I quickly got up, and left the foot of Gallahad mountain range.

The sky resounded with the garuda's cry, a howl of a windwolf could be heard far away, and maybe a dortoth is rampaging again somewhere, since the ground is shaking a bit.

Having become used to such an environment, the 5th month quickly passed away as I settled in my life as an adventurer. The 6th month started and summer had come.

Today on the 4th day of the month of new sun (Shinyou), exactly 2 months after I had met Lily.

Chapter 47 - Start of Summer

In the eastern region of the Pandora continent, including Irz Village, a festival known as the [Festival of Natsugoshi (lit. beyond summer/keeping summer)] on the 30th of the month of new sun (Shinyou).

The word 'Natsugoshi' might seem like an unfamiliar word, but every Japanese should have heard of 'End of the year/New year's eve'.

'End of the year' is a time for doing major cleanups, meant to wash away the impurities and welcome the New Year.

This 'Natsugoshi' was also similar to that. In the same meaning, the villagers start doing major cleanups and then welcome the summer.

Originally, it was meant to maintain hygienic conditions and surroundings by doing major cleanups during the start of summer and end of year.

Although medicines and pharmaceuticals had also developed in this world along with restoration and healing magic, but they are still not on the same level as modern Japan in terms of medical facilities. So it was extremely necessary to improve the hygienic conditions through events and also prevent any outbreak of diseases or epidemics.

Though it possessed such an important and serious objective, in the end, a festival was a festival. Whether it was this world or my original world, it was normal for people to get excited during festivals.

Finishing the cleanup by the 30th, on that day a festival is held with all the effort of the villagers.

This was what I heard from Nyarko inside the guild's lobby as I ate my lunch.

"I can't stay silent if we're talking about festivals!" (Kurono)

"I have also enjoyed them every year." (Nyarko)

My first festival event in the different world! I am of course excited but it seems Nyarko is excited as well.

In this different world where there are few sources of enjoyment and pleasure, a festival would definitely be one important and large event.

“Lily-san also comes every year. She treats people who get injured.”

“Is that so? That’s unexpectedly mature of her.....”

Just like her age, no wait, just like her outer appearance suggests, I thought she would go around frolicking in high spirits, but to think she would be a part of the management staff.

That mature Lily was currently in a corner of the lobby playing around with a round fat cat.

If you play around too much then your valuable Ancient Velvet one piece dress would get covered with fur you know?

“This year Kurono-san is also there, so this year Lily-san can also be carefree and go around enjoying the stalls.”

“Yeah, the two of us can—oh, are you saying that there will be stalls too?”

“What are you saying Kurono-san? If you talk about a festival, then the first thing you think about is the numerous food stalls, isn’t it? Ah, could it be that it wasn’t like that in Kurono-san’s hometown?”

“No, we had them in my hometown as well. Guess they would be selling eatables that can be easily consume while walking right?”

“Yes, there are a lot of shops selling skewered grilled meat, and sake～. During festivals, people loosen their strings on their purses it seems, so it’s easier to make more money. Even though I know this, I still end up buying lots of things after all～especially on that mysterious lottery done near the item shop.”

“Ah, old man Kische seems like he would do a lot of things.....”

“But, it really is fun to walk around the various stalls even if the feet get sore～. This year I am lifting my ban on high spending!”

“It really was fun to but as much as you could from the little pocket money I was given as a kid...”

Well, in my original world, I would have still been officially a child though.

I went to the literature club, and didn't have any part time jobs either. But to think that my first ever manual labour would be as an adventurer in a different world, really, no one can tell what life has in store for you.

"When I was a child I dreamt of conquering over all the types of sweets being sold in the stalls, but this year I'll make sure to actually realise that dream~fufu~."(Nyarko)

"It might not feel that amazing when you actually do it, you know?"(kuroono)

"Oh come on~Don't say such realistic things now~"

Today also, I kept on chatting idly with Nyarko. This will probably continue until Pine-san comes, I guess.

Although Nyarko doesn't stop no matter what, but I guess I'm also the same since I never stop her either. Maybe what Nino said about me interfering in her job might be actually true.

"But still, doesn't it feel like summer has already started before the festival? It's become much hotter in the past few days."(Kuroono)

Probably, Irz village is on a lower latitude than Japan. I can already expect that the days would be extremely hot for a long time later on.

Will I be fine wearing my favourite [Demon's embrace] under that scorching sun?

"Yes that is so..makes you want to drink something cold, right?"(nyarko)

In this world ruled by magic, ice isn't something high priced.

Even a rank 1 magician can create a lot of ice. If I used Aten's Ice Armour Shield, just how much shaved ice could be made out of that?

"Yeah, I really want to eat shaved ice, also ice creams—"(kuroono)

As I remembered about such captivating ice items,

"What's shaved ice or ice cream?"(nyarko)

"Eh, you don't know?"

"Never heard of it. Is it a food from Kuroono-san's hometown?"

The Irz village had all sorts of eatables except junk food, so I thought they would have had ice cream. But, I see, in this world, at least near this village, Ice cream hasn't been created yet.

"Yeah, it's a pretty much staple item to be eaten during summers. But, alright, if you don't have ice cream, then no choice but to create some!"(kuroono)

"Ooh, a local dish from Kuroono-san's hometown!? This should be exciting!"

Well, I wonder if it's fine to call shaved ice or ice cream a local dish.....

"Alright, tomorrow also looks like it'll be hot as well, so I won't take any quests today and try making some."



Chapter 48 – Popsicle

I who was thinking of making ice-cream, in particular popsicles, began collecting materials at once.

“Welcome, did you finally run out of potions Kurono?”

“Regrettably I’ve only used one so far.”

I’ve come to the adventurer’s purveyor, the Irz village item shop.

Now that I have become a regular customer over here, we don’t talk to each other using honorifics.

“I’m looking for wooden sticks.”

The thing I’m searching here is definitely not the raw materials for ice-cream but the flat stick which will become the handle of the popsicle.

“A wooden stick, then how about this white wooden stake? When stabbed into their heart, the vampire race who takes pride in their immortality will be killed with a single blow.”

“I’m sorry I didn’t make my request clear, I’m not here to buy a weapon today.”

Putting aside the foolish imaginations of a delicious frozen treat that can also be used to murder vampires, I explain the circumstances and what I’m looking for.

“Well the most suitable thing I have is grilled chicken skewers.” [TN: yakitori]

“That will do.”

In addition, I purchase a container to act as a mold when I solidify the ice. After promising to give him the popsicle if it turns out good, I leave the item shop.

After purchasing the ingredients which will become the raw materials for popsicle, I leave the Irz village and return back home.

After returning home I start making popsicles with Lily, or rather, without Lily making popsicles would not be possible.

“Now that it has come to this, let’s make popsicles.”

“Popsickle?”

Lily blanky tilts her heads in confusion, it’s a normal reaction as she doesn’t know the existence of ice-cream.

“It is a dessert from my hometown which is cold, sweet, and delicious... at least when it is made successfully.”

I haven’t made popsicles since childhood.

But this time the materials and ingredients I have are different from modern Japan. If I fail then in the worst case I’ll end up with juice.

I’m a little anxious while I start making it but there is not a lot of work.

I smash an orange and grapes (which are genuinely like those on Earth unlike the false apple) which I bought to remove the juice. To each I add sugar and water to make an undiluted solution (it can almost be said to be juice).

I'm lucky that white sugar is circulating in this another world due to luck. Looking from the history, the making of sweets started when modern era started, after all the sweet items are luxury items.

However, here spices and salt are also available, so getting sugar was relatively easy. It seems like there will be no problems in making other sweets too.

In any case, I pour the undiluted solutions into the metal molds and add the skewer sticks to let it cool down.

As for the most important task, I ask Lily.

"Okay Lily, please freeze this with a little bit of ice magic."

"Yes!"

Without knowing how it will help, Lily uses her freezing magic.

For this thing, my black magic is totally useless.

My black color magic consists of materialization of substances, adding enchantments, and making dimensional spaces for now. I cannot use the common color magic elements like Ice or Fire, or rather, there is no color magic inside my body, so it is impossible for me to learn it.

Therefore, I asked Lily who can use color magic to some extent other than her inherent magic Extra.

Similar to when Lily boils tea, a chill gushes out in the same way she breathes fire.

"Fuuu! Fuuu!"

The effect of the magic is powerful, in an instant the juice solution is frozen solid from Lily's hard work.

To eat the ice candies right from the shell, just freezing it slowly won't work. The freezing ingredient (a three to one ratio by weight of ice to salt) is used to freeze it in a few minutes.

But I can instantly freeze things without such a thing if I use magic.

"That's enough now Lily."

"Hmm?"

I stop Lily's ice magic and reach out a hand to one of the containers.

While taking into consideration, if pulling it forcibly, it would uproot the skewer, I form an blade near the sides of the container using the black magic.

In front of the blade sticking out of the wall of rock of the container, the hardness of popsicle is as same as non-existent. I lightly open up the lid of the container.

And then, I smoothly pull the popsicle out of it.

"How is it?"

While receiving the gaze of curious Lily, I face the popsicle with seriousness that I've never shown.

As expected, there are no flavouring or coloring agents in it like the goods in the market, there is not much color in the popsicle and of course there is no scent.

But the taste should not be bad, while believing in that I put the popsicle inside my mouth.

The taste of the orange's sourness and the sugar's sweetness spreads inside the mouth along with the feeling of ice cubes crunching.

Yeah, this is without a doubt an orange flavoured popsicle!

"Yay, I made it just fine! Here, Lily you also eat it."

I take out the popsicle using the same trick as before, and hand it to Lily.

She takes the popsicle while full of anticipation, and without hesitation bites into it.

"Chomp Chomp——!"

"How is it, is it tasty?"

"Tasty!?"

Seeing Lily eating it like crazy, I can get the idea of how tasty it is.

Even in another world, the kids love popsicles, as expected.

"Well, will you also eat the grape flavoured one?"

"Yeah!"

In this way, I remember about the nostalgic feeling of Japan, Lily also ate the frozen dessert while being happy, and so I completed the making of popsicles.

The next day, I came to guild for a midday meal today like yesterday.

“Oh, Nyarko-san, I made the ice-cream I mentioned yesterday, will you taste it?”

I hand over my best made popsicle to Nyarko, who came to me as always.

Besides me is Lily who has become a prisoner of the popsicle and is eating a grape flavoured one with relish.

“You really made it! Is it the one that Lily-san is eating?”

Seeing Lily who is eating it with relish, Nyarko’s eyes shine with anticipation.

“Yeah, it’s a popsicle made by freezing fruit juice—let’s skip over the tedious talks, try eating it. Ah, orange or grape, which one would you like?”

Then with orange, Nyarko answers. I take out the container stored inside the shadow space and hand over the popsicle to her.

With the same movements as Lily from yesterday, Nyarko bites into the popsicle.

“Chomp! Chomp!?”

“How is it?”

“Thi, this is——”

Nyarko eyes open wide in surprise, it seems like an lighting effect could appear behind her.

“What is this—! *Licking*”

Nyarko licks it wholeheartedly, as if licking a soft cream, and it is finished off very fast in front of my eyes.

Now that I think about it, the cat’s tongue is rough as it is made for ripping off the meat sticking to bones and Nyarko who is a cat beastman might also have it, but still, will the popsicle be shaved off just by licking it?

While thinking about these trivial thoughts, the popsicle disappears.

“So was it good?”

“Can I get the grape flavoured one too?”

I hand over the grape flavoured popsicle without speaking a word to Nyarko who has the eyes of a predator looking at its prey.

“Thank you very much—— *Licking*”

But well, from the looks of it it looks I don’t even need to ask about its taste.

“This popsicle thing is really great! It’s my first time eating such a tasty thing!”

“That’s right, it tastes even better when eaten on hot days.”

“That might be right! This is a great invention Kurono-san!”

“Though it’s not me who created it.”

“No, no. this is an item which can bring a revolution in the food industry of Irz village. If put for sale, this will be really popular, no objections asked!”

“Oh, Is that so, it will be a hot summer after all——”

Somehow, it feels like it'll be more peaceful if I sell popsicle with Lilly, rather than doing dangerous adventurer work.

No, I must at all costs find a device, altar, or magic circle inside a dungeon to go back to my own world.

It's not the time to think about selling ice cream all the time.

“It is easy to make it, if I told it someone they might start selling it.”

Naturally, I'm not so good of a person to tell it for free. Though it is not a franchise, but let's try selling it out to merchant guild at price equivalent to it.

“Ah, Kurono-san you have a bad face right now.”

“Hahahahaha, If I make a profit, I will let you eat as many popsicles as you want.”

“Really! It is a promise then!”

“Yeah, but if you eat too much it'll ruin your stomach, so keep it in control.”

For proving that popsicle is an innovative sweet, I thought to let other people try it as samples.

At the right moment the members of Irz-Blader came inside the guild. First of all, let's make you guys the prisoners of popsicle.

“Oi Kurono! You gave something to Nyarko just now, right! Trying to win her through presents huh, you bastard!”

Before I can call out to them, as usual the personal knight of Nyarko, Nino comes rushing forward. [TN: Real translation would not sound cool. So i modified it a little. Though the meaning is not changed at all.]

“Calm down, I will also give it to you.”

“That’s not the problem here! In the first place, you after all are eating midday meals here with Nyarko everyday, what do you want!”

“Even if you ask me what I want... Anyways, how about you invite her for midday meals and dinner if you don’t like it?”

“Du, du, dumbass, I can’t do something so darin——”

I don’t understand whether Nino is just pure or just incompetent. If you like her that much keep on attacking/approaching her.

Well, I can’t say something so grand, as I have no experience in approaching any girl I like.

“An, and if i get refused....., I might never be able to cope up with it.....”

This guy’s lost it, Incompetent alert!

“So what is it you will give us Kurono?”

Ignoring the already dead leader, Aten steps forward to me.

“Aa, I made a sweet from my hometown called a popsicle, so I thought of letting everybody eat it.”

“Popsicle? Never heard of it, but making sweets, Kurono you surprisingly have a girly hobby.”

“When it’s hot everyone yearns for it, well you’ll understand it once you eat it.”

“Ho~, pretty confident aren’t you?”

“Lily, Village Head, Nyarko, all three praised it saying it’s tasty.”

I presented it to Village Head before coming to the guild, when I went for my daily routine of reading there.

“For the time being, try to eat it, the flavors are——”

I distributed the popsicles of the flavour the guys wanted.

Everyone eats it together, the impressions are, well the same as till now——

“”Tasty!!””

And then, Aten also asks for the other popsicle flavor like Nyarko.

Even in the real world, It is this time of day one yearns for eating an ice cream.

Chapter 49 - The Hungry Witch

That day, after distributing popsicles to many villagers, I made my way back to home. Of course, I didn't take any quests like yesterday.

Well it's not like I have to do quests everyday for my livelihood, one way or another it will be okay.

I give Lily a piggyback. While thinking how to sell the popsicle recipe to the merchant guild, I advance on the highway.

I've also gotten way more familiar with this highway having a dark background during the time the sun sets.

Normally, peddlers pass by this highway sometimes, but today I discovered a person that I have never seen.

That person was lying on her back without moving a twitch.....It was a witch.

"No matter how I look at her.....she's a witch right?"

She has a three-cornered hat covering her face, which I've only seen in picture books.

She is wearing a similar jet black robe like me, but near the bottom of her neck it is decorated with feathers. I can tell that it is an superior-class quality item.

Her weapon the long cane staff is leaning on her.

The more I look at her, the more of a perfect witch vibe she gives. It feels like I've just slipped into a fairy-tale world.

Well, this is a different world, so it might not be a peculiar thing here, but more importantly,

".....What should I do in this situation?"

"?"

I don't know how to deal with such a delicate situation, Lily also looks puzzled.

It seems like she's asleep, but this is not the place to take an afternoon nap (It's already evening though!).

However, if it's an sudden illness only I can save her right now. There is almost never a person crossing the bridge at night.

Even so, she doesn't look like a person sick from illness.

Let's assess the situation, maybe a witch sleeping at evening on the highway might be natural in this other world, right? It's just that I don't know about it, right?

No matter how much I rack my brain, I can't think of a single reason why this witch is sleeping on the highway.

Should I call out to her? Or shall I ignore her?

After various simulations, the moment I thought of calling out to the witch,

"—That person over there, you're carrying something tasty, aren't you?"

The witch suddenly speaks out, and what's more, very rude words for someone she's meeting for first time.

"So, you were awake after all?"

At the Witch's abrupt statement, the beaten down me reflexively forget my polite speech and speak in the normal tone.

"Right now I'm very hungry, I want to eat something tasty."

The witch takes off the three cornered hat that was her on her face and sluggishly puts in on her head.

And her hidden face is revealed.

Her expression is terribly sleepy with eyes half-opened, but still it's so cute that one could take her for a noble person just by judging her face.

Her skin is white, has bluish short hair, and golden eyes, though the colouring pattern is different she is definitely human.

The magical power sometimes affects the appearance of the user. The colors that are impossible to be found in my previous world are not particularly unusual in this world.

Now that I think about it, she said "I want to eat something tasty" in a clear tone, so she's not sleepy, contradictory to her appearance.

"Ah I want to eat delicious things. Ah, I wanna eat~"

"I got it, I will give you something to eat, so listen to me."

"Really? Thank you."

There is not not much change in her expression. But I did notice a slight happy expression swelling up from her.

My sister was a thoroughly expressionless person. Thus I have developed a skill to read through an expressionless person and I'm quite confident about it.

There are those expressionless types which have a wealth of hidden feelings and there are those like my sister who is the type whose feelings are all neutral.

Looks like she is the former type, I instinctively thought.

"Ah, sweet things if possible please."

".....Got it."

In addition, looks like she a person who goes at her own pace.

'I got stuck with a pain in the ass type of person' while thinking that, I take out popsicle from the shadow.

"aiskyandi!" (Lily) [TN: Lily speaks in hiragana, so it's not really the word for popsicle.]

"You've already ate three of them, now wait till tomorrow."

It's not good to pamper Lily too much, thus I forged my heart into stone and decided to give her just three popsicles per day at most.

That's why I will not give it to you even if you make a face like you're dying for it.

"What is this?"

"It called a popsicle, it's made from freezing fruit juice."

"It's my first time seeing it, thanks for the unusual thing."

The witch's eyesight is already pinned on the popsicle, though her face is expressionless her eyes are like of a predator looking at its prey. [ET: Nyarko's disciple?]

I shake my hand right and left, and the witch's face chases after it while swinging her head.

".....Meanie?"

"Sorry, unintentionally."

She was looking at popsicle so seriously that I unintentionally played with her.

While trying really hard not to laugh, I hand over the popsicle to the witch.

"Chomp Chomp——!?"

“Is it tasty?”

“—It’s ridiculously tasty.”

The popsicle vanishes almost instantly in her mouth. Even among the villagers who ate it today she the fastest of them all.

“You had a sweet and delicious thing after all, just like I thought.”

“What is that, witch’s intuition?”

From the popsicle container that is inside the shadow space, no smell should leak out, and of course no one should be able to see it.

“I can somehow know that you’re hiding tasty something even if it’s in the shadow space.”

“.....Really?”

“I just know, but it’s only that much.”

Do witches just somehow know that sort of thing? I always thought the concealment nature of the shadow was perfect, or is there a skill present in this world to see through such things.

By chance, is she a great witch? Or is she just a roadside glutton with tremendous talent?

I have many things to ask about, but first of all,

“Why are you sleeping in this place?”

Unless I ask this, the talk won’t go anywhere.

“Because I was hungry.”

“Did you collapse?”

“Something like that.”

Despite in the situation where her life is in danger slightly, she still nonchalantly answers.

“Then you should eat something that fills up your stomach, not just a popsicle.”

“I don’t like anything other than sweet things.”

“This is not the time to be picky, walk a little and buy something in the Irz village up front. Do you even have money?”

“I have gold — see here.”

Saying that, she puts her hand inside the hat and takes out a large-sized golden coin.

On one side is a portrait on a woman and on the other side is a never before seen magic circle drawn near the border of coin.

It might have been used for a long time as currency. The sides are chipped off a little.

But even those places which are chipped off are showing the luster of gold, looks like it's not plated with gold but rather made from gold itself.

I can't tell it's exact value without weighing it, but it easily surpasses the value of a normal 1 gold coin.

Ah wait, it's already surprising about the big gold coin but she took it out of her hat, most likely she's using a similar sort of magic as my shadow magic.

If she learnt it through the proper way unlike me, then among adventurers her rank even in the lowest would be 3.

She doesn't seem like the person she appears to be.

"If you have such a good gold coin, you can buy anything."

"Is that so? The with this gold coin, let me buy those popsicles from just now."

"Too bad, the previous one was the last. and hey! Didn't I say to go and buy something that will fill your stomach?"

"I only like sweet things."

I heard it before!

Hey is this lass normally this unenergetic?

"Can you walk to Irz Village? It will take 1 hour at most to reach there from here."

"If it's that much then It's okay."

"I see, well it looks like you're a traveller witch too."

There are many travellers in this world like adventurers, merchants and troubadours.

"It's okay now that you have given me something delicious. Are you also a traveller?"

"No, I am— ah, I have not yet told you my name, I am Kurono, and this is—"

"I'm Lily."

"Are you both adventurers?"

In order to easily tell her, I show her my guild card.

“What is this?”

“It is a guild card, do you not know?”

“I saw the guild card from here for the first time”

‘From here’ you say, is she from a different country?

No wait, if I remember correctly this guild card is common through the whole Pandora continent.

In that case, she might have come from the western great desert or maybe from a very remote region.

“Isn’t it better to register as an adventurer if you’re confident in your magic? When your travelling funds run out you can earn them soon enough through it.”

However, if she has a lot of those big gold coins it’s a story of years from now for them to be exhausted.

“I am also thinking of becoming an adventurer soon. I thought to register when I reach the city of Spada.”

Spada is from what I know, the city state in the middle of continent adjacent to Daedalus’s territory. [TN: Daidalos from now is changed to Daedalus.]

I’ve never been there, but it is pretty famous even among the numerous city-states in the Pandora continent.. Even a countryside adventurer like me knows about it after all.

“That’s why I don’t have that guild card, so let me show you mine——”

Saying so she once again rummages in her hat and takes out the card.

That was completely different from my metal plate guild card seeming like a dog tag, it was a real card seeming like a trading card made of cardboard.

The characters written on it are this world’s peculiar alphabet.

『Fiona Soleil』

Looks like this is her name.

The fact that she has a surname means that she is a noble having special circumstances to have come here.

Well it’s the courtesy of an adventurer to not pry in that area, I should ignore it.

Her class is also magician, the rank is also written but it’s different from this guild’s splitting method, so I don’t know her rank exactly.

“If you’re an adventurer you can live anywhere, but try to refrain from falling on the street to sleep.”

“Yes, I also think if I have my stomach full all the time I will be happy.”

No, that’s not the damn problem here.....well whatever.

“Well then, we are going out of here, Fiona-san you should also go to village before it gets dark.”

“Yes, let’s meet again.”

“Yeah, if an opportunity arises.”

And then, I bid farewell to Fiona-san and once again start my way back.

But why do the villagers and Fiona-san also pronounce the popsicle as “eye scan ‘de’” [TN: popsicle is said as ice candy in japanese so they are speaking it as eye scan ‘de’]

Chapter 50 - Media Ruins

Currently I'm sitting in the guild lobby, staring at a certain request.

As I was pondering, once again today, Lily was playing with that fat cat in the corner of the room happily.

"You seem to be in deep thought Kurono-san."

As I turned to look back, the brains of the Irz Blader, Harry was standing there. Since he didn't have his bow with him, he probably came to either see some quests or to have lunch.

The other members might have gone to the item shop or blacksmith for other preparations probably.

"Yeah, this quest caught my eye so I'm thinking whether to take it or not."(kurono)

"—Investigation of the new area in Media ruins, is it?"(harry)

Sitting opposite of me, Harry read through the document.

"I did hear about a new area that had been discovered around last month."(harry)

There's barely anything left of the Media ruins above the earth except a cliff, but its true worth lies underneath it, in the underground centre.

The underground centre was not made by using a cave or cavity but a geofront made through the sole work people.

In this different world, an ancient civilisation that possessed super technology once existed.

The current Pandora continent does not have the capabilities to create such a geofront, but it did exist in the ancient times. By the way, this ancient civilisation wasn't an advanced one in the science field like making flying cars etc. but was advanced in the field of magic.

And thus, only in the ruins of such a magically advanced civilisation will I find a magic big enough to send me back to my home.

“Come to think of it, Kurono-san was searching for ancient transfer and summoning magics, right?”(harry)

“Yeah, I was thinking maybe I could find my objective there.”(kurono)

Such items haven't been discovered in the Media ruins yet, but, nobody knows what's there in the unexplored new area, so the probability isn't zero.

“Then, isn't it fine to accept this?”

“That may be so but, the fact that even rank 1 adventurers are allowed is kind of bugging me.”

The danger rank of Media ruins is rank 4. The highest dungeon I have ever entered is at rank 4.

Although, if I am together with Lily, then we could even defeat a salamander so danger level is not really a problem, but.....

“Well, it certainly is suspicious.”(Harry)

“Right?”(kurono)

It's a rank 4 dungeon, and an unexplored area to top it off (Though, it has been 1 month since it was discovered so I'm not going to be the first one.), so the danger would be even higher. Normally speaking, even a luggage carrier would have to be at least rank 2. But instead, they are basically saying anyone is fine, so it feels a bit unnatural.

“I don't want to get involved in troublesome things after all.”(kurono)

“ahaha, Kurono-san is unexpectedly a cautious person.”(harry)

“What do you mean by unexpected? Do you really see me as an idiot?”

I'm still a magician you know! Shouldn't that give me a naturally intelligent image?

“At the very least, you don't seem like an actual magician. After all Kurono-san, you have a pretty big and sturdy body. People with body like yours would usually be a swordsman or warrior.”(harry)

As I looked around, I see lots of well built warriors drinking tea with other adventurers wildly.

“Even though, I’m not really training my body specially either.”(kurono)

In fact I’m working hard in studying magic.

“But, looks really do matter, yeah.”(kurono)

“No need to lament so much about it, hey, at least you won’t be made fun of with that aggressive face of yours.”(harry)

“Nah, I would’ve preferred to be slender like Harry.”

“I’m a harpy so this the standard type of body though.”

Maybe because they are meant to fly, Harpies usually have slender bodies.

Compared to humans, they certainly have less muscle and fat. Differences in races can be seen in other things other than outer appearance as well it seems.

Incidentally, Harry’s magic speciality is wind magic. With the assist of wind magic, Harry’s bow can rapid fire and strengthen arrows.

“Returning back to the topic, what do you think about this quest?”(Kurono)

“Hm, I think it would be fine if it’s Kurono-san. And if Lily-san is also together, then there’s no fear of getting tricked either.”(harry)

Apparently Fairies don’t associate with a bad person. That’s not just a legend but actually somewhat true. They are able to read the opponents heart and feelings and can also use telepathy, so they can see through a person by meeting just once.

“I guess. In the worst case, if the client runs away, the guild will deal with it so I’ll get the reward at least.”

Even if a dangerous monster appeared, I’ll be able to run away at least. Although, I’ll be helpless if something like a cave-in occurred. But over thinking is not a trait of an adventurer.

Holding a little hope, I decided to accept the quest.

“Ah, but Kurono-san, you have to worry not just about the quest.”

“Nn?”

“Do you know about the location of Media ruins?”

“Although it’s my first time actually going there but—”

According to the map, it’s quite near the capital Daedalus.

“About that, it seems, coming and going out of Daedalus is being restricted now.”

“What do you mean?”

“I don’t know the details but, the human army from the Arc continent is currently fighting with them.”

“What? Weren’t they blockaded inside Virginia?”

“That was how it was supposed to be but, I wonder what happened?”

“Could it be that the situation has changed?”

“Yes apparently. The elites of the army have been practising and the dragon king is also there. To fight against a dragon they must have brought something of equal strength to a dragon.”

“Dragon…….”

My strength is a bit more than a rank 4 salamander. If it is a dragon that could become a king, it would be at least rank 5, that too among the strongest even in that rank.

Although I don’t know exactly how strong that is, but maybe at least 100 of me would be needed to face something like that.

“Probably, they are undergoing some negotiations is the general rumour.”(Harry)

Negotiations can be done only among those of equal stature.

If the rumour is correct, then does that mean that the human army possesses the same level of strength as Daedalus army?

Did they put the military strength in their own nation at lower priority? No if that was the case, then it would have ended when they attacked half-year ago.

That means, in that half year, there was a change in the situation of Virginia or of Daedalus.

What kind of change was it? I won't be able to understand considering it hasn't been long since I myself came here.

"Anyway, the atmosphere around Daedalus isn't very good right now. Although I don't know what exactly is happening, but you should be cautious of this more than the quest."(harry)

"I see, Thanks for the warning. If I learn something on the way, I'll tell you."

Having decided to accept the quest, I made my preparations during rest of the day, and left the Irz village the next day.

"—Yes, well then, please work hard Kurono-san."

Having accepted the quest officially, Nyarko who was standing behind the counter, accepted the certificate.

When you accept a quest of a far away land, such a certificate is issued.

Something like this is a first time for me, but since I'll put the certificate in the shadow space anyway, it doesn't really matter much.

"But Media ruins are pretty far away~ You won't be returning to the village for quite a while, right?"(nyarko)

"Yeah, if I'm unlucky, I might not return until next month."

"That's not good. Please be back by the festival!"

"n, yeah, I want to take part in the festival as well."

"That's right! We are aiming to finish the complete menu of all the stalls after all!"

"Are you trying to sponge off me?"

“How rude! I’m a woman that can totally pay half the bill! But if you treat me a few times you will raise your favourable impression, don’t forget that.”

What will I do after raising something like that? Will she become able to play ‘hand’ with me?(T/N: I couldn’t explain this better but Kurono is basically joking about how owners teach their pets to raise their hands and shake with them. Those who own dogs or cats should understand better.)

“If this quest goes well, I’ll treat you to drink one time.”(kurono)

“As expected of Kurono-san! It’s a promise alright!”

“Only if it goes well, alright?”

“It’s fine! Kurono-san can do investigations quests easily!”

“I hope so. Now then, I’ll go now since Lily is waiting for me as well.”

“Yes, take care Kurono-san.”

Once again with Nyarko’s energetic voice behind me, I leave the guild.

As I opened the door, the members of Irz Blader were coming here.

“Leaving for the quest, Kurono?”

“Yeah, to Media ruins.”

“This time it’s to an unusually faraway place, did something happen?”

If it’s a good quest then tell me, implied Nino with his eyes.

“It’s a personal search. On top of it, the quest itself seems suspicious. If I didn’t have my own reasons I would have ignored it.”

“Is that so? Then be careful. Will you be able to come back by the festival?”

“That’s the plan. I ended up promising Nyarko to treat her once as well after all.”

“I see—wait a second, that means you’ll be together with Nyarko during the festival!?”

“Ah.....sorry.”

I realized it now. Crap, it's as if I stole a march on Nino and invited her.

"You IDIOT!!!"

Nino, who had started crying, threw his cat punch which I decided to take head on.

"Sorry, about Nyarko, well, try to invite her yourself with all you have got."(kurono)

"You just made it even more difficult!"

"If she refuses, then I'll help you on that day somehow."

".....really?"

"Leave it to me."

We shake hands. I'm still rooting for your love you know.

"haah, as usual he becomes pathetic when it comes to Nyarko. Well leaving that incompetent aside, Kurono treat me to something too~"(aten)

"Don't call me an incompetent, Aten."(nino)

"Kurono please~"(aten)

"Don't ignore me!!"(nino)

Aten pushes Nino away with her staff and looks at me with upturned eyes. Those eyes seem quite serious.

".....just once, alright?"

"Yay! It's a promise alright!"

She gives a wide smile. But I can't get fooled, Aten is definitely looking for the costliest sake in the village in her mind right now.

Maybe I was rash.....

"Kurono-san, you're going on that quest, right?"(harry)

"Hm, yeah."

Different from the incompetent leader and the money-minded woman, Harry asks with a serious face.

“Media ruins are filled with high ranked monsters not found near here. Be careful.”(claydor)

Claydor advised with a serious face.

Probably because these 2 are both serious type, Nino and Aten are usually like this other than during battles. Maybe this is also a kind of balance.....probably. Right, let’s leave it at that.

“Well then, see ya.”

“Ou, work hard!”

“Kuroono! Don’t forget the promise!”

“Yes yes.”

Waving my hand without looking back, I walked towards the village gate where Lily was waiting for me.

Chapter 51 - Dead End

The territory of Daedalus begins from the eastern coastline of the continent and extends westwards till the Gallahad mountain range.

On the map of the Pandora continent, the Gallahad mountain range is placed slightly east of the centre of the continent. It extends towards the north and south in the form of an arc. A little further east from the centre of the mountains is our Irz Village.

Irz village is located on the western region inside the territory, and Daedalus is on the extreme eastern side. To go there, it will take about 1 week even with my legs.

And the destination this time, the Medea ruins, are located near that Daedalus. Travelling long distances is certainly difficult, but this is also something an adventurer cannot avoid. It's a good thing I have body that won't get tired even after walking continuously for 3 days and nights.

Adventurers that explore in the Medea ruins use a village known as Riol as the base camp, so I'm also aiming to go there.

Riol is also one of the villages located west of Daedalus.

Daedalus is the starting point of the five major highways. Among them, the biggest is the one leading to the port town in the south east (Virginia is located north-east), and the north-west one that goes through the Gallahad mountain range and leads to the city-state of Spada.

The former is to connect Daedalus to the port town flourishing with maritime trade and commerce, and the latter is made wide for the army to march through easily.

It was made wider to act as a route for the army when they eventually start a campaign in the centre of the continent, but the campaign hasn't started yet, so it is currently being used by big carriages to travel between villages.

But the route I'm currently taking is the much smaller south-west highway. The neighbouring village of Kuar acts as key point of transport as both the north-west and south west highways connect there.

The road between Irz-Kuar is a part of the north-west highway but it's the south-west highway that is directly connected to Riol village.

To enter the south-west highway from Irz, it was necessary to go to the adjoining Kuar village. It was a bit of a detour, but comparing the two highways, the south-west highway was a shorter route to Riol.

If I had a big carriage then I might have taken the north-west path, but all my items were inside my shadow space, and the only thing in my hands was the sleeping Lily, so it was obvious that I would chose the shortest one.

And so, without facing any problems, as I continued down the highway, I reached the last village before Riol. The name of the village was Enkul. It was a small peaceful village similar to Irz. Here I face an unexpected problem.

“Dead end? What do you mean by that?”

There was no problem in entering the Enkul village itself but the other gate leading to Riol was sealed shut. I had heard from Harry that entry and exit had been restricted but to think it had been completely stopped.

“There had been an order to seal all pathways leading to Daedalus. Even we don’t know when the release order will come.”

The gatekeeper told me.

He was an Orc dressed in black full armour. He had a face that would scare the shit out of anyone if someone sees him walking at night but he told me the situation quite politely surprisingly.

By the way I am not talking politely because I’m scared or anything, I made it a rule to talk like this with anyone when meeting them for the first time.

“Currently, Daedalus is in negotiations with the humans of Arc continent but its details are completely unknown.”(orc)

“Then, it’s true that Daedalus is currently negotiating with humans?”(kurono)

“Yeah, no doubt about it. Before the blockading order came, both armies battled it out on the Goldran hill. They are currently talking about post-war treatments probably.”

“Was it such a large scale battle?”

“I don’t know what those humans were like but, the Daedalus army had the Dragon king leading 20,000 men after all. That and the outcome of the battle, who won or lost, is still unclear means that the humans must have at least a large army of 100,000.”

“The outcome is unclear.....Daedalus army didn’t win?”

“Yes, although I didn’t hear that they lost either. It must have been close enough to be called a draw, that’s why it has become so troublesome now.”

Then that means that the higher ups of Daedalus decided not to declare anything to the public until the negotiations with humans are fully settled because the result of the war wasn’t very good.

It’s not impossible. After all, the Daedalus army that has been making light of the human army was made to face a draw, so they can’t just declare that to the public so easily either.

At least, the Orc gatekeeper and other villagers are of the same opinion.

But, for a moment, the worst situation possible situation came into my mind.

Could it be that the Daedalus army actually lost to them?

“You were going to the Medea Ruins right? Too bad but this also part of my job so I can’t allow you to go any further. Shouldn’t it be better to just abandon the quest and return back to your village?”(orc)

“.....I guess so. It’s a pity but I’ll go back.”(kuroono)

As I looked for the Enkul village guild, I moved away from the gate.

Right now, I should just listen to the gate keeper and finish the formalities to abandon the quest.

“Kuroono.....”

Maybe because she read the anxiety in my heart or maybe it was shown on my face, Lily looked at me worriedly.

“It’s alright. Is what I want to say but I just can’t help but get this bad feeling—“(kuroono)

The Daedalus army tied with the Human army and this information has not yet been made official was the opinion of every village surrounding Daedalus including Enkul.

Well they were right in thinking that the government had decided not to declare the outcome of the war, but they were completely wrong about the details of that outcome.

Daedalus army had not tied with the Human army but had been completely defeated by them. Moreover, the dragon king Gaevinal had been killed as well.

Also, it was rumoured that they were in negotiations with the Human army but in fact Daedalus had already been completely occupied by the Crusaders that won on the Goldran hill.

Well then why did the human army, even after killing the dragon king and occupying Daedalus, had decided to seal all routes and information?

There are a few reasons.

Firstly, the representative of the victor Crusaders, Archbishop Liuchrome had demanded this from the Daedalus side. After the battle of Goldran, the Crusaders had just enough numbers to occupy Daedalus. He didn't want this information about lack of forces to leak outside.

In case, they announced the occupation of Daedalus grandly then other units of the army located throught the territory or the armies of other city-states might invade Daedalus.

The remnants of Daedalus army might try to take revenge for the death of their dragon king and charge with the resolve to die an honourable death, and other city-states might see this as a chance to expand their territory by capturing Daedalus that was in the middle of chaos.

If the info about the lack of forces in the Crusaders were revealed, then the chances of both the parties attacking would become even higher.

Liuchrome thus decided to conceal information and instead gave away vague info like [Daedalus is negotiating with the Crusaders] to buy time for the reinforcements to come from their homeland. This was the truth behind the sealing and blockade of Daedalus, on surface the reason was to avoid confusion among the citizens.

Again, even the Daedalus side were resistant to declare that the dragon king had been killed in action.

It could be said that they were also wishing for this so as a result they quickly accepted Liuchrome's demands, and the blockade was quickly applied.

Currently, approximately 1 month had passed after Daedalus had been occupied.

Everything went according to plan, no armies tried invading Daedalus, and the homeland sent reinforcements to Virginia one by one.

That's not all. In this 1 month, Liuchrome took over all controlling rights, and along with the info manipulation, also kept the Crusades in check. Daedalus was in control without any chaos or revolts.

The church believers were all of the opinion that demons were meant to be exterminated, but Liuchrome who took calm and rational judgements did not rashly oppress all the other races that lived here and did not allow his subordinates to do so either.

He, even if the other party were enemies, did not enjoy ruthlessly massacring people. Indulging in such things will only satisfy the greed of the worthless scum and will also stimulate opposition from the citizens. From the point of view of a ruler, it had zero merits.

In controlling a defeated country, Liuchrome was truly humane as well as understanding, truly an ideal ruler.

But, the people of the church and republic were not all like him. In fact, people like Liuchrome were very rare existences, but the people of Daedalus did not know that.

He, who was here, was also the same.

"aah.....my lord, my king.....why....."

That voice echoed inside the empty throne room.

1 month ago, on that decorated throne, sat a man who had an overwhelming presence, truly a king.

The king's name was Gaevinal, a black dragon with incredible abilities.

And the man who was here was a human who had been serving that dragon king even before Daedalus was founded.

As Gaevinal's right hand man, he had become the Prime minister now.

"Why.....why did this....."

As the Prime minister who manages the country, he could not show his emotions in public, but right now that façade had been completely broken and tears were falling out of his eyes.

"uuu....."

Till this day, he had directly negotiated with Liuchrome, as the representative of Daedalus.

Negotiation, were in name only. Daedalus that had lost had no other choice but to give everything away to the victors, that is the Crusaders.

All he could do was to ask for proper treatment of the citizens that had followed his respected and beloved dragon king.

"No more.....I have nothing else I can do....."

Tomorrow, the blockades will be lifted, and finally the Crusaders would begin their genuine rule.

The death of the dragon king will be announced to all of the citizens and the country known as Daedalus would collapse and would be annexed into the Syncrea Republic.

Hereafter, he would either be executed after being charged with some crime or made to cooperate with the Republic.

In any case, he has one last duty to fulfil.

Today, on the last day of the Daedalus, he had finally reached his limits.

"My king....."

In the first place, he had sworn to be with Gaevinal in life and death.

These were his true feelings.

To him, Gaevinal was an absolute existence, and he truly believed that he should have followed him the moment he heard of his death.

As a result, finishing all his duties, now that the country Gaevinal created was finally collapsing, he had lost all reason to live.

“I’ll be by your side…….”

In this empty throne room, there was no one who could stop him.

In his left arm, he held a Gaevinal’s scale and in his right he held a container.

A brilliant red liquid was filled inside that container.

And, without any hesitation, he drank the red poison in a single breath.

“Gah——“

Instantly falling on his knees, he fell face front on the ground.

The poison quickly circulated inside his body, and in a matter of seconds, he passed away.

“All hail……Dragon king…….”

Anyone who saw his current appearance would feel pity for him.

But the fact that he did not have to witness the gruesome trampling of the Daedalus territory that was going to start from here onwards, he might have been the most fortunate person.

Chapter 52 – Fear Revived

It's 12th day of Shinyou month, the sky is already dyed red and soon the night would come.

While thinking that I rush along the highway.

The destination is not Irz Village, but Daedalus.

"I thought I would reach it before sun sets, but it looks like it's still far."

I feel bad for Lily who is clinging on my neck while inside the hood of robe.

But no matter what, I want to know about the situation of Daedalus.

Ignoring the orders for no public crossing, I am heading towards Daedalus.

If the worst case happens and I'm spotted by any of the Daedalus soldiers it can't be helped if I'm thrown in jail.

The biggest reason for taking such a big risk for going to Daedalus is the uneasy feeling swirling inside my heart.

I'm not convinced about the groundless uneasy feeling, but I still couldn't ignore it.

If Daedalus was defeated by the human army, then the whole Pandora continent will be engulfed in war.

Surely, many people will laugh at my thinking, regarding it as delusion.

However, I know the what actions an 'invader' takes due to my knowledge in previous world. Furthermore, I know the cruelty of the people wearing cross uniforms through this body.

This world with magic is not some sort of fairytale story. I was summoned here against my will and was set up in experiments equivalent to torture and was also forced to fight against fellow experimental subjects too.

If those bastards invade in great numbers, then the Pandora continent will go through the path that I've learned from history lessons.

In brief, the peaceful life I have built in Irz Village is in danger.

In the first place, I came to Pandora Continent to run away from the cross uniform bastards, even if they are not here following me their searching range will be expanded eventually.

Therefore, to prevent the danger to me, my livelihood, and Pandora too, I came to the conclusion to go to Daedalus.

I really am feeling bad for taking Lily, more than half the reason she's here is for my own self-protection.

Of course, I tried sending her to Irz Village when we left the Enkul Village, but Lily being stubborn didn't nod at my words.

Definitely, Lily got a feeling that I'm in going to a dangerous place, so she might have chose to follow me.

I've made a decision already, to let Lily escape if we both get caught in a dire situation.

"— — That is Daedalus, huh?"

Though the surroundings are dark, my reinforced eyes catch a glimpse of the rumoured big castle walls of Daedalus far in the distance.

And so, I left the highway and started crossing through the forest.

I'm most likely to be discovered if I keep on walking on the highway, so it's better to continue until Daedalus while sneaking.

The Riol Village I passed some hours ago had its doors completely shut and was quiet.

But, what about Daedalus?

From what I can see, there are no signs of destroyed castle walls.

Was it not a big scale castle siege war? Or is the opposite side of the castle wall broken?

I rush through the forest while holding my breath with my thoughts in a confusion.

"Great, It so big— —"

Finally I came close to the Daedalus castle walls.

The wall standing majestically in front me can make someone think about a precipitous cliff.

The trees of forest are stopped where I'm standing. There is nothing to hide myself in between the walls and me.

If there was a tall tree I can invade by climbing it, or if there were big bushes I can approach while being unnoticed. It is natural to have those ideas when there is nothing in front of castle walls.

The problem is, how to reach the walls without being noticed.

Come to think of it, the first place I infiltrated the port town had low security that's why I was transported easily.

I had already been predicted that it won't be as easy as the previous time but.....

"I don't see a single person."

From the looks of it, there doesn't seem to be a single soldier present here. Thirty metres above there is a passage present on the top of wall, but there is no sign of patrolling soldiers, of course the same can be said for the outside circumference of walls.

Perhaps even though they are patrolling it's not like they can monitor each and every section of outer wall.

If it's like that it's not much of a big deal to approach the walls, and to climb the 30 metres walls is an easy feat for this body along with black magic.

Now the problem left is,

"The barrier, huh. It's my first time seeing a genuine one."

Unlike the shield, a barrier is a defensive magic that completely covers the target and can be maintained 24×7 hours a day.

It blocks all the attacks from outside and monitors the presence the of intruders within a fixed region and various other functions...

The only barrier I have and know of is Efreet, aka 『Mosquito Repellent』 , which deploys a barrier of flame to keep mosquitoes away.

And at the present time, there is a large scale barrier standing with Daedalus as its origin.

It's not a shining bright light, rather it's colorless and transparent, but even me who is standing 500 metres away from it can feel the strong magical pressure it exerts.

The difference in defensive ability with that 『Mosquito Repellent』 is like that of heaven and earth.

Due to this powerful barrier there are no other soldiers except for at the main gate, probably.

The magic used by this barrier is white magic. It seems impossible to invade through just brute strength as my black magic has extremely bad compatibility with the white magic

But however, the current me is not alone, I have a reliable partner!

“Lily can you open a hole in that barrier?”

“Un——I can!”

The white magic used by Sariel and the light magic used by Lily have completely different origins.

The light magic also acts a counter for my black magic like the white magic, whereas it is also classified as a color magic.

But still, they are both different. If it's Lily who has good compatibility with her magic and excels at controlling it too she can pierce a hole through the powerful barrier.

“Well the, Let's go——”

I grab Lily under one arm and run the 500 metres at full speed.

Being coupled with the black clothes I doubt I will be found out. Please God don't let me found out.

I don't know whether my prayer was heard or it was inevitable but I safely reached the walls.

And though it can't be seen through naked eyes, there is a barrier standing. It might be a barrier that restricts physical intrusion, or it can be like the one place on the treasure box which gives out electric shocks.

Until I know it's nature, It's a bad idea to touch it.

Even though I know letting Lily touch such a thing is SO SINFUL, but here I can't do anything other than relying on her powers.

“I'll leave it to you.”

“Yeah!”

Lily touches the invisible barrier with her both hands.

From the point of contact, the white light ripples as if a rock has been thrown onto water's surface.

“Nh——”

Lily's two pairs of seven coloured wings sometimes flap and her white lit body flickers.

I feel for Lily who is seriously trying to pierce through the barrier, but this glittering light is unreasonably standing out.

It doesn't matter if there are no soldiers here, but in this dark night the shining Lily can be spotted from 100 metres away rather easily.

The only thing I can do to help her not be spotted is just covering her with my robe.

It's pretty nerve-wracking, but I still wait in silence for its completion.

How much time had passed? Maybe not even 3 minutes have passed but due to nervousness it's feeling twice the length, then suddenly Lily speaks.

"It's open!"

Not the meaning of 「It's painful」 but rather 「it's open」 she said. [TN: In Japanese "Aita" means it's open and "Ah itta" means painful. Both sound similar that's why author is deliberately explaining it.]

Upon looking in front of Lily, there is a faintly shining circle drawn in empty air.

The circle is big enough for me pass easily, When I pass my hand through it I don't feel anything out of place.

Looks like she's succeeded in piercing the barrier.

"You did well, Leave the rest to me."

I pat at Lily's head, while she rejoices like a puppy.

I would also want to leave everything and keep on patting her, but there's not time for that.

Putting Lily once again in the hood, I jump through the circle in the castle ward.

"Let's go in one shot."

Compared from the time I laboriously climbed the walls of the port city, my magic skills have also improved.

After all, I conquered a cliff of 100 metres to just invade the nest of a Garuda, If I use the rock climbing magic skill I used at that time, this 30 metre stone wall is just a child asking to be climbed.

To look cool in front of Lily who worked hard to open a hole in wall, I activate the magic while doing a signature pose.

"Anchor release!"

From the palms of both hands, a black wire flies out along the wall.

The wire with a harpoon like object at its tip sinks deep at the top of the wall.

At that time the rear of the wire starts to coil around the hand, hips, thighs, and the sole of my feet.

It's alright with just coiling around hands, but it'll help in more balance while climbing if there is a back support.

"Let's go."

After listening Lily's reply, I retract the wire at once.

While being pulled by wire, I rushed up the vertical wall in one spurt.

This "anchor" is the same famous wire action that sometimes appears in action games. It is also called as 'hookshot' or 'grappling beam'. In short it is using a wire to move on a vertical surface like 'TARZAN'. [TN:

AIYAIYAIYAIYIA. pfft]

My black magic can materialize simple objects like bullets and much more, and also excels at controlling them. If there is a really good imagination, then making a retractable wire is easy.

Using this "anchor" climbing a wall of 30 metres is as same as running on flat ground.

In several seconds I climbed the wall and land near the passage.

"No one is he.....re?"

There really is not person near the passage.

While paying utmost attention, I looked towards the Daedalus city below the walls.

Below is a very vast street of houses and shops. It's so big that many Irz villages can fit in it.

And the walls are covering it whole. It's a tremendously big city.

If it's a normal person they would have gone to bed by this time of night. In the corner of what is apparently a residential area are some houses with lights on whereas as red-light district seeming area is full of bright lights.

Even among them, the most noticeably shining is the castle of Daedulus.

The castle is covered by walls. From here the ground and the first floor of castle cannot be seen.

Even so, there is light glittering from there which is shining on the very large castle in the dark night.

Looking at that, I start to heave a sigh at its majesticness .

But, the moment I saw the flag hanging from the castle, I gulped down the sigh I was going to release.

“That is the.....the cruciform symbol.....”

The flag there was not the national flag of Daedalus with the dark emblem imitating King Gaevinal but it was the flag with an emblem of cruciform symbol which seemed to me like annoying madness.

“It’s a lie, right.....That means the human army, are them.”

If I look closely, inside the city there are various sizes of the same flag hanging.

This scene was frankly saying the fact that Daedalus has been occupied by the Crusaders.

“Tsk, Damn It——”

It’s the worst, it’s a nightmare, the worst case scenario I thought has turned into a reality.

I found out that the cruciform symbol flag is not hoisted by a cult of humans, but is the national flag of Syncrea Republic.

Slowly, depairs starts spreading inside my heart.

Those bastards, Those damn bastards really did came to Pandora Continent in great numbers.

The fact that they have occupied Daedalus can only mean that there is no other force that can oppose them.

A big country like Daedalus is easily captured in a blink of an eye.

These bastards are planning to conquer the whole Pandora Continent, and do that not so far in future.

What should I do? Should I fight? Or escape?

“Damn.....”

The Dragon King who is more powerful than me was defeated even when he was leading an army. They’re not the enemy I can fight against. Even in the world of magic it’s impossible for an individual to win against a whole country.

So should I really run? But to where? Is there anyplace these bastards won't come?

Damn it, shit, no matter how much I think nothing good comes to mind. No matter what I think, I can only imagine these bastards coming towards me with their cross in their hands.

What should I do——

Kurono!!”

“——!?”

Lily jumps at my chest and tightly hugs me.

“It's alright, Lily will save Kurono. Even if bad guys come, I will protect you!”

Lily spurts some tremendous lines. Even though I didn't say any words, Lily who can read a person's mind feels my uneasy feeling.

“.....”

I cuddle Lily who is clinging onto me.

The faint warmth I feel at my hands and chest brings me back to my sanity and removes the uneasy feeling.

Argh, damn It, I showed an uncool side of me to Lily.

“Lily, I'm alright.”

That's right. Now I'm not alone and I can't only think about myself only from now on.

Just like Lily said she'd protect me, I will also have to protect Lily.

I definitely won't let those bastards take away my peaceful life once again.

“It's dangerous being here, let's leave.”

“Yeah.”

Due to the restriction on information spreading, the news of Daedalus occupation is still not reached to any other village.

If I don't do anything, these bastards will attack all the villages within Daedalus territory.

It's impossible for me to resist until the bitter end, but I can escape from here.

If it's no good to run within Daedalus territory, I can only run to other countries.

Well, the problem is whether the enemy nation Spada's city state army will let me in or not. If they don't I've got no choice but to do an illegal immigration.

First I need to tell this info to the nearest village, No, I don't even know if they will hear my story who is only a rank 1 adventurer. The only route for me here is to talk to Village Head of Irz village to exert influence on other villages.

I once again start racking my mind for what to do from now on. Just as soon I started to make an anchor for going down the wall.

“——What might you be doing here?”

I heard a voice!... Spidey sixth sense alert!!!!

A voice of refreshing and beautiful little girl.

Before even thinking that the voice is familiar, a face of certain person rose up in my mind in an instant.

When I turn back to look, there stood the girl not any different from what I imagined.

A beautiful girl with platinum long hair, along with a pair of two big red eyes, wearing a vestment with cruciform symbol.

The girl, who showed me overwhelming power and the origin of my overwhelming fear is....

“.....Sariel.”

There stood the strongest person I know of, 7th Apostle Sariel.

Chapter 53 – Crusade's Supreme Commander

Under the starry sky, Sariel and Kurono are standing facing each other. Kurono forgets about his cold sweat flowing, and faces head on with Sariel as if to hide Lily.

"Kurono Maou."

He hasn't been called that in a long time, no for Kurono, it was for the first time to be called by his full name in this world.

To a devotee of the cross religion, it might seem as god's words to them but to Kurono, it only seemed as the whisper of grim reaper.

The uneasy feeling of his was settled down by Lily, but immediately after seeing a danger in front of his eyes, the fear torments Kurono's heart once again.

But still, due to Lily behind his back, he breaks free of fear's grasp and various trains of thoughts come to his mind.

Kurono thinks, the fact that his name was called means that this isn't a situation he will be killed with no questions asked.

"What are you been doing here?"

He is once again questioned.

'If I don't answer would I be instantly killed, If I answer would I be killed even so'. Kurono who can't think of any situation favorable to him, speaks in in half despair.

"It's Tourism. The walls of Daedalus are famous, right?"

"I see. However it's better if you don't do it right now."

Kurono was surprised at the fact that Sariel took his joke to be real. He was lucky that he didn't get a white stake which can pierce the shield easily in return, and didn't think any further.

"Sorry for that, I would be grateful if you let me return back quietly?"

"Yes, you can go."

With an tremendous answer in return, even Kurono who had been keeping his poker face opened his eyes wide.

"Is it really alright?"

“Yes.”

Kurono tries to examine through Sariel’s expression, it is similar to the first he met her.

Kurono thinks that if he just gets away like this, he won’t be pierced.

He also thinks that Sariel might have no intention to kill them on that place.

「.....Do you mind if I ask you something?」

Kurono thought that if Sariel has no intention to kill him even if he doesn’t run from here, then he can use this opportunity to gather some information.

Kurono doesn’t know anything about Crusaders. In the first place, He doesn’t know that the one leading the army of people called as “Crusaders” is Sariel.

“What is it?”

As expected, Sariel replied.

“Why did you come to Pandora continent?”

“Our lord 『White God』 desires this land. Therefore, we “Crusaders” came to this land to offer it to him.”

“Is it for propagating the cross wielding religion.”

“Yes, It will eventually turn out to change the religion of every person on Pandora continent to that of Cross.”

The Crusaders and then Cross religion, they more or less seem like the Christianity religion. Perhaps, the Cross religion and Syncrea Republic have deep relation between them. Long story short, it is a religious country or so Kurono guessed.

And thought that it starts as the propagation of Christianity and leads to colonization pattern.

“Do you guys know, what result will your actions cause?”

“Yes, A lot of blood has been spilled by now, it will also keep on from now on.”

“Do you have no intention for retreat?”

“Until our lord desires it.”

Kurono exhales a single breath.

He had predicted the answers without needing for Sariel to answer.

In short, they have no intention to retreat and will cruelly kill anyone who opposes to them.

“The King of Daidalos, is he dead?”

“Yes, I killed him.”

Kurono was not shocked at the fact that the Dragon King was killed, rather he was shocked to learn that Sariel had the power to kill an existence everyone said “can’t be killed”.

“So, what will happen to Daedalus from now on?”

“I will be getting everything within Daedalus territory.”

“You will?”

Sariel didn’t say 「We will」 but 「I will」 .

Kurono always thought that no matter how great she is, she is only a soldier in the end.

However, from her way of speaking, it only seems that his thoughts were wrong.

And Sariel says the words that confirm it,

“I’m the Supreme Commander of Crusader after all.”

Kurono suddenly understood, that she is the one who leads the crusaders, the top brass.

“I see.....”

Kurono turns back and face his back towards Sariel. He takes Lily from the hood, who didn’t budge even a little and took her out.

While feeling Sariel’s gaze at his back, Kurono crouches and embraces Lily.

“Fue!?”

Lily raises her voice due to suddenly being hugged, Kurono without minding it, whispered in her ears.

“Lily, tell everything to Shione – san everything you will hear now.”

“Eh?”

While hearing Kurono’s words Lily, felt within his heart was a great fear and sorrow and the ‘courage’ which is pushing them back.

“Kurono——”

Kurono guessed that Lily has read his true motives already, he grabs her in his arms once again.

“——Nooo!!”

“Thank you for being with me till now, It’s goodbye.”

Kurono while holding Lily with his left hand, throwed her with his full strength towards the forest.

“Kuronoo——”

Lily is thrown with a terrible speed. Sensing danger to her automatic defense “shield” activates which covers her whole body. Leaving a trail of white light, she flies away.

“Sorry, Lily.”

Kurono who murmured those words was already holding the ‘*Black Ballista Replica*’ in his right hand.

Facing towards Sarel, who was staring him, he wielded his baton.

Chapter 54 - Assassination Plan

“.....What are you planning to do?”

The full metal jacket bullet I fired was stopped by the inverted triangular white shield just like that time.

This time, the only difference is that a small crack appeared.

I can do this.

“Magic bullet – Bullet Arts.”

As I lightly swung the baton like a conductor, black bullets appeared in a spiral formation around my body.

The thousands of bullets that appeared around me are all made by the highest level of composition of black magic. Moreover, due to the baton’s abilities, every bullet holds more power than a normal [anti material].

“Fire all bullets – Full Burst.”

I released all the bullets towards Sariel at once.

Black muzzle flash and firing sound, along with the sound of destruction of castle wall on which Sariel stood, resounded in the silent night.

Instantly, dust rose up and the visibility got blocked, but I already know even without seeing that Sariel is not there anymore.

Just before I fired, I saw her jump away from the castle wall.

“I won’t let her get away——“

Shooting Anchor from beneath my legs, I chased Sariel and jumped down from the wall.

“——I can’t let her get away!!”

As I threw myself in mid-air, I saw the grassland that I had been running on just some time ago.

Without any where to hide, also without any reason to hide, Sariel stood there in her white dress like a ghost.

“Magic sword – Sword Arts.”

I grabbed the wire with my left arm and raise the baton with my right.

As my robe fluttered in mid-air, I opened my shadow space and brought out 3 blackened long swords.

I bought these from the blacksmith shop at the Irz Village.

“Pierce through!!”

Before my body reached the ground, I launched the 3 swords towards Sariel.

One made an arc and approached from the left, similarly one approached from the right, and one charged directly towards her and attacked her.

“—”

I didn’t hear, but I saw her lips moving, and at the same time I landed on the ground. A small shock ran through my legs.

Since I used the wire to decelerate myself, I landed without giving any chance to attack—

Bagin!!

“!?”

A sound resounded near my legs. The 4 white stakes, Sariel used, had pierced through hem of my robe and sewn it to the castle wall.

But none of them had pierced through my body so it must be to stop my movement.

But when were these stakes fired? I couldn’t see them at all.

As I moved my eyes to confirm it, I once again looked back towards Sariel. She had a slender spear of the same colour as her stakes in her left hand. On its spearhead, as if catching fish with a spear, my three swords were lined up together with their centres pierced.

And, just as I had once seen before, the three blackened swords were instantly invaded by her white magical energy and scattered to dust.

“Goddamn monster.....”

Whether it be the speed of the stakes or the way to destroy my swords, I was once again made to realize the difference in our powers.

Slowly, regret and fear spread inside me, and I had a sudden impulse to start crying and beg for my life.

Sarier slowly came towards me and spoke.

“Will you stop resisting?”

I almost gave an affirmation to her words, but somehow stopped myself by grinding my teeth.

“I have no intention to hurt you.”

I hate myself to have felt relieved from those words.

“Will you retreat quietly?”

Running faraway with Lily was an extremely charming offer, but I use my full strength to reject it.

“haha.....”

I laughed with a shaky, pathetic voice.

“Who will miss this chance——”

I raised my voice, and cheered myself up.

I forcibly escaped the stakes while tearing the pierced parts of the robe.

I swung my baton and materialised bullets and at the same time brought out 10 long swords this time.

Moreover, I hold the cursed hatchet [Tsuigiri] in my left hand.

“Sariel! I’ll kill you here and stop the crusaders!!”

“Is that so.....”

Facing my full magical energy as well as bloodlust head, there was not a single change in her sculpture like face. She didn't even take a stance with her spear.

That's fine, that composure of yours will become my chance of winning—

“Let's go!!”

“Because I'm the supreme commander of the Crusaders.”

Sariel definitely said that.

If not for those words, right now I would have been running along with Lily on the highway.

But, I recklessly challenged Sariel, no, that's not it, lives are on line here. This is an assassination.

[Assassination] is to kill by using a gap in the opponent's defence. If going by those words, then this moment is Sariel's 'gap'.

As the top of the Crusaders, to have appeared without any guards; if there was an assassin, there was not any better situation than this.

Even now, not a single soldier has come to assist Sariel and it's still one-on-one. Conveniently, for some reason, Sariel is not trying to kill me.

If she wanted, she could pierce through my heart any time no doubt about it. But to have tried to pin me to the wall is a proof.

This robe is a high class good with defensive ability higher than a steel plate mail. For a second I was worried that the robe had lost its magic and become a normal cloth.

Basically, my life is in danger. This is the only chance for me to defeat her.

But why did I have to take this chance with my life on the line?

If it was the me 2 months earlier, I had nothing more important than my own life. I would never put it in danger.

But, now I have things I want to protect even at the cost of my life.

Lily and Irz village, even though it hasn't been very long, I still can't let the Crusaders do whatever they want.

I will never trust these bastards who wear crosses. I don't care if it was something wished by God, but that's nothing more than using a god's name to kill, steal and destroy.

In the end, the Crusaders are big enough to have invaded and occupied Daidalos.

If the Daidalos army fell to them means that the Crusaders are very strong. I don't know if even other countries would be able to win against them.

But what will happen if the top of the Crusaders is killed here? I don't know how the chain of command of Crusaders work but if the commander dies then an organisation shouldn't be able to sustain itself.

I don't know how much authority Sariel herself possesses, but I do know that she is a major part of their military force.

If the top loses, the invasion plan would definitely be largely affected, or maybe, it might end all together. At least the effect would be much better than fighting the whole Crusaders head on.

But, that's only if I am able to successfully complete this assassination.

I am well aware of how strong Sariel is. In terms of level, it's a gap between 1 and 100.

But, even if this is a magic world, doesn't mean it's a game world. There are always ways if you want to 'just kill' someone.

It doesn't matter how hard I have to try if I can just kill her, I'm fine even if I am able to take her down together with me.

If that can save Lily and the villagers, then I'll bet my life as many times as I can!!

Chapter 55 - Black Magician Vs. Apostle

“Let’s go!!”

Swinging my baton, I once again release a storm of bullets towards Sarel.

“Shield.”

As Sarel whispered, a white inverted triangular shield appeared in front of her.

[Shield] is one of the most basic defensive magic, a normal magician would never be able to block my bullet storm with just a shield.

But, Sarel’s shield blocked all the bullets and sustained only a few bullet marks.

Even the same magic would be completely different if the magician is different, wait, this isn’t the time to be impressed.

“Not yet!!”

From behind the bullets, a black sword stuck right at the point where the shield had a little crack due to the bullets.

Finally the shields were pierced and broke with the sound of breaking glass.

“With this—-“

I attacked with more black swords, one from the same path as earlier and 3 from above.

All them came flying towards Sarel in the very moment the shield broke.

But, she had already moved away from there to evade them.

Although I was unable to catch when she actually moved, I had already predicted that she would evade.

The remaining 5 swords were already flying from the back of where Sarel was standing before.

Sarel who had jumped backwards was attacked by the 5 black swords from further behind.

“—how’s that!”

“Stakes – Sagita.”

This time, Sariel used a basic attack magic.

The moment that voice reached my ears, I lost the sensation of all 10 swords.

Why? I don’t even have to think about it. The answer is in front of me.

The swords that were stuck in the ground as well those that were flying were all crushed by the stakes, no, bullets fired by Sariel.

“Will you stop attacking?”(sariel)

“hah, is that the first thing you say after stealing someone’s magic?”(kuroono)

“

Sariel lifted her index finger of her right hand as if pointing towards me. In front of it, a white bullet similar to my Anti Material took form.

Although, its size was the same as the stakes, i.e. 30cm, rather than bullet this was big enough to be called a cannon shell.

“Your original magic is certainly unique and powerful—“

The white bullet in front of her started rotating.

At the pointed end, white magical energy started revolving in a helix.

“—but it cannot kill me.”

“Shield!?!”(kuroono)

As I constructed the shield in front of me, at the same time Sariel fired the shell.

That shell that was even faster than my bullets, similar to that time, pierced through even my improved and stronger shield easily.

“Kuh—“

Instantly my left hand reacted and the blade of the cursed hatchet crossed with the shell.

Gagin!!

With a high pitched metallic sound, I somehow deflected the shell.

Due to the shock, my stance got collapsed, and stumbled two-three steps behind and managed not to fall down somehow.

As I returned my sight in front of me, Sariel had disappeared from there.

“Where——“

Before my eyes, I sensed her location instinctively——above me.

As I looked up, with the crescent moon as background, Sariel was flying towards me with the spear in her left hand.

I don't have time to recreate a shield; even if I had it'll get pierced through anyway.

“oooohh!!!”

I met the spear coming from the sky with my cursed hatchet.

The clash of the edges gave off sparks.

“.....hard.”(Sariel)

Maybe she was planning to destroy the hatchet with a single attack, Sariel landed as she said that.

Even though both of us are in each other's cutting range, we remain still.

“That's my line.”(Kuroono)

Uptil now this cursed hatchet had been able to slice through anything. This was the first time its blade was stopped.

“It's a cursed weapon, it's impossible to destroy it with that lump of magical energy.”(kuroono)

Sariel's spear was, in a way, similar to the white stakes. It was simply materialised by pressing your own magical energy together.

It's the same as her using her hand as a sword and I was using a knife.

"If that broke, will you leave this place?"(Sariel)

Just a little, I felt that Sariel's gaze got sharper.

Even now, she is allowing me to run away.

"If you want to stop me———"(kuroono)

I took stance with the hatchet in my left hand and loaded bullets in the baton in my right.

Furthermore, from my shadow, I brought out 10 blackened swords and deployed them around in a circle.

"then come with the intent to kill!!"(kuroono)

"That's too bad."(sariel)

As she said that, at the same time, a silver aura burst out of Sariel.

I have seen that aura before as well. Now that I have learnt a bit more about magic, I can confirm that it's not any enhancement magic but simply magical energy leaking out.

In short, she has gotten a bit serious, but that's it.

Although I still don't know the extent of her powers, I instinctively as well as rationally understand that she is revealing more than enough power to kill me.

I won't last long against Sariel clad in her aura, no, I might fall in a single clash.

There is a 5m of distance between us. The time between the moment when Sariel leaps towards me and pierces my body with that spear is the last chance I will have.

"I'm coming——"(Sariel)

At the same time Sariel said that, I release the bullets from my baton. It heads directly for the forehead of Sariel that was approaching me.

Direct hit, but it is unable to pierce through the silver aura and vanished like the mist without dealing any damage.

Maybe even the blackened swords will not be able to pierce through, I thought that, but that doesn't change the fact that I need to use all 10 swords to intercept Sariel.

From the front, I aimed for the forehead, neck, chest, stomach, and groin with 5 swords in a straight vertical line, and the crown of the head and the limbs were attacked by the remaining five.

"Stakes."

Similar to before, white bullets accurately shot down the 5 swords coming from above, left and right. The 5 coming from the front were cleanly destroyed with one swing of the spear.

But, the distance between us is currently 3m.

If I take one step, I could cut her. To take it on, she will have to bring back the spear used to destroy the swords. But, in this close range, that will become a fatal mistake.

"haa!!!"

Dropping the baton, I held the hatchet with both hands and I stepped in to deliver a powerful slash.

Even though I have never learned swordfighting, but together with my enhanced body and the abilities of the hatchet itself, I can produce strength enough to cut through her aura along with her body.

The hatchet that was swung sideways, its blade certainly cut through her aura, but the moment it was about to reach her thin body,

Gakin!!

It was blocked with the spear that had somehow returned back to place.

"__"

Our gazes crossed.

Even though expressionless, her eyes appealing to end this fight.

The fact that my attack, that was made while she had already swung her spear, was stopped means that she can make two swings with her weapon in the same time I swing once. That's how high her attack speed is.

If she is that fast, by the time I attack next, she could freely choose any part of body and pierce through it.

I can't attack with the cursed hatchet anymore, bullets didn't work in the first place, I used up all my swords with the last 10, and I have no way to counter-attack between the time her spear swings and attacks me.

Probably, Sariel is thinking the same thing.

And that will be my only chance at victory.

"—now."

From the shadow space I opened near my legs, I fire a single black needle from the darkness.

That needle is [Basilisk's bone needle], a 'cursed weapon' I never got to use after buying it at Irz Village.

The moment it stabs, it starts corroding the body, a simple yet dreadfully effective poison needle.

If the wielder himself touches it he'll also get poisoned so it is treated as 'curse'.

But, this needle can pierce through Sariel's aura, if I can hit her once more then I can deal a fatal blow.

And in actuality, the poison needle came into contact with the silver aura, started corroding it and flew directly towards the heart.

"Is this your trump card?"(Sariel)

And sure enough, the needle was unable to reach her heart.

"Kuh....."

The needle was fired at the same speed as that of a bullet but, Sariel moved faster than that, and that's all it took.

The right hand that had not yet moved until now, before I realized it, had moved over her right chest to protect her and her palm had blocked the needle.

The needle that had pierced through her palm completely only reached her robe and stopped there.

Sariel who had taken it with her bare hands, the corrosion of the poison began to spread.

But still, Sariel without seeming even a little bit agitated, took a step back and used her spear to pierce through her whole palm along with the needle.

The needle was smashed, and the poisoned flesh was instantly shaved off, thus stopping the corrosion.

As blood gushed out, a painful looking hole could be seen on Sariel's palm.

All I could do was be dumbfounded as I looked at this chain of events.

Dotsu

Suddenly, a shock ran through my left arm.

I realized that Sariel had attacked with her spear when I saw that the cursed hatchet had fallen to the ground.

"Guh....."

Probably, my left wrist is broken.

It'll heal by itself sooner or later but it won't do so instantly, I don't even have the time to pick up the cursed hatchet either.

All plans were broken through, and I don't even have a weapon in my hands now.

I still have magical energy left, but I don't have any magic that could be activated faster than Sariel attacking with her spear.

It was checkmate. In this situation where I had nothing left to help me win, the regret and fear that I had subdued instantly spread within me.

I should have run away. Should I beg for mercy? Someone save me.

——I can't think of anything better.

I'm pretty sure I'm currently sweating like crazy with a pathetically pale face. Probably due to pity, Sariel's spear had not yet pierced through me.

".....wait a second."

As my mind was in chaos, I remembered one thing. A magic that could pierce through her aura and was also faster than her spear.

I didn't hesitate even a second to use it. My right fist had already become tight.

"Pile——"

I raised my fist overhead and stepped in.

The activation process is simple. Simply gather magic in my fist and release it.

Already, magical energy of density much stronger than the time I had first used it, gathered in my arm and swirled around.

The image is a drill, rotating at high-speed, I concentrate all the destructive power on the pointed end.

Eat this! My final useless struggle.

"BUNKEEEEEEEERRRR!!!"

The swirling black fist was intercepted by white magical energy.

The first thing I felt was the sensation of that magical energy, next my brain recognised what I was seeing. It was the sight of Sariel blocking my pile bunker with her bloody right hand alone.

From the hand that had blocked me, white magical energy was rotating in the reverse direction of my own.

Both the magical energies were nullifying each other out at the point where they touched. And soon, my destructive black magical energy disappeared without any trace.

".....so, it really was useless."

As I finally felt a sense of complete defeat, a strong shock attacked my head.

The last thing I saw was the usual expressionless figure swinging the spear horizontally.

Sorry Lily, it seems I won't be able to protect your village———

While thinking that, my consciousness was broken off.



Chapter 56 - Fairy Vs. Apostle

The fainted Kuroono had collapsed on the ground.

“.....”

As Sariel looked over him, she started to rack her brains a bit.

Her first worry was what she should do with Kuroono. The second was that she had once again ruined her regenerated right hand.

The latter could be solved as it would heal with the passage of time, but she couldn't come up with what she should do with Kuroono instantly.

In the first place, no matter how much Kuroono tried to kill her, Sariel was not going to kill him. Sariel was fine if he would just live happily somewhere far away.

There might be experimental bodies that might curse Kuroono because he was the only one who had gotten free.

But Sariel found some sort of salvation in Kuroono who had attained freedom that none other experimental body including herself could attain.

She wanted him to live the share of every experiment that had died as well.

That is why she let him run when she met him in the 3rd laboratory and was also going to let him go this time as well.

A 'normal' life away from fighting. He had definitely achieved half of it at least. But,

“You have got something to protect as well right?”

The fairy girl that Kuroono let go of before attacking, he met her in this world and she became precious enough for him, to put his own life on the line to protect her.

Sariel met countless men on the battlefield that fought to protect something, and, she did not let even a single one of them return back alive.

Kuroono's figure was completely overlapping with those brave heroes that came to fight only to face a tragic death.

“Still, I don’t want you to die.”

In a way, this was only to fulfil her own ego. She started thinking of a way to get him out of here.

“.....”

As the commander of the Crusaders, she couldn’t just let someone who attacked her to go freely intentionally.

Kurono’s true identity was a modified [Foreigner], not a general or a noble of Daedalus, even lower importance than a normal civilian, so they won’t follow him to the ends of the earth to kill him at least.

But, if the Crusaders caught him, then he’ll be definitely executed for trying to assassinate the supreme commander.

So, she can’t call the army here.

But she can’t leave it as it is either.

If he woke up now, it’ll be good if he just ran away, but there’s a chance that he might start attacking again as well. In the first place, there’s a high chance that the guards patrolling would find him first.

In every case, the result isn’t very appealing.

Then, maybe she could make someone carry Kurono to a far away town.

But, Sariel didn’t have anyone to whom she could entrust such a personal task. And even if she is the supreme commander, she can’t give such a weird order either.

“.....What should I do?”

After becoming an Apostle, she had done nothing but destroy the enemies so this was the first time she was thinking a bit in a human-like way.

Fortunately, she already informed the subordinates that she was going out for a bit so at least she had time to think.

Originally, she had come here because she had sensed the barrier breaking. The barrier was not the type to inform of intruders so nobody else had come here other than Sariel.

Sariel was standing there looking at Kurono and had not even remembered to erase her spear.

As she was thinking inside her head, she suddenly looked towards the forest.

("Something is.....coming")

At first, she only sensed it as an indescribable atmosphere but it soon turned into a clear 'abnormality'.

Inside the dark forest, a green light could be seen.

That light was approaching this place and was getting stronger and bigger.

And, at the same time she saw the light, she realized that the trees in the forest were losing their colour.

As the light came closer and closer, the trees in visibility that had thick trunks instantly started to wither and the fresh leaves started to dry up and fall away.

"This is.....Life Drain."

Sariel confirmed, the light in the forest was stealing the life force of the trees in the forest and collecting it. Life force is an energy included in magical energy required to sustain life.

Magicians would never use life force unless they were using suicide magic – Apoptosis. And a magic that could steal the life force of others was a taboo among taboos, an extremely dangerous thing.

Sariel felt that it was fortunate that normal soldiers were not here.

If a drain of this level was activated, people with no training in using magic, and those that have low resistance would all have been in fatal danger right now.

Facing the green light, Sariel realized that even though she could not see it, life force was being drained like a storm right now.

All the trees in the forest had become dried, and it had become a forest of death where not a shred of life force could be sensed.

And, the reason of this abnormality, the emerald light finally came in front of Sariel.

“Get away from Kurono.”

It was a girl with a presence somewhat similar to Sariel.

Literally shining platinum blonde long hair and white skin.

Eyes that were same colour as the emerald green sphere of light surrounding her.

Wearing a frilly black one piece dress, on her back were 2 pair of rainbow coloured wings.

It truly matched the image of the fairy princess that had appeared once in a book Sariel had read a long time ago.

“Who are you?”(sariel)

But that girl with the unparalleled beauty, twisted her beautiful expression in rage, and released bloodlust that could be seen with naked eyes.

“I said——“

In response to Sariel’s question, the girl,

“—Get away from him!!”

Attacked with an immense beam of magical energy.

(“A chantless [Flashing white arrows – Fortius Sagita]——no, a type of [Extra magic] or [Original Magic]”)

As Sariel thought that, she took evasive manoeuvres but as the name suggested, the speed of those beam was at light speed.

Unable to completely dodge, the beam burned away the hem of Sariel’s priest vestment.

Dodonn!!

The beam that passed Sariel, struck the barrier and without almost any resistance, pierced through it and hit the castle walls.

The wall that got destroyed with a loud boom raised a cloud of dust reached even till where Kuroono was lying.

“Kuroono!!”

Sariel heard the voice of the girl beyond the cloud of dust.

As soon as the cloud of dust disappeared, Sariel saw the girl lifting Kuroono in her arms.

“Kuroono—”

The expression on the girl right now as she called Kuroono’s name while crying was so ephemeral and sweet that it made the expression she showed to Sariel feel like a lie.

The girl hugged Kuroono’s body as she brought him to a sitting like state.

Sariel couldn’t hear what the girl was whispering but she should have realized that Kuroono was only unconscious.

The girl, then, easily picked up Kuroono in her arms even though she was half his size.

“Are you the girl that Kuroono let go of earlier?”(Sariel)

“Don’t call his name so lightly!”

Once again a killing gaze pierced through Sariel.

Even the emotionless and detached Sariel understood that the girl was angry, and she understood the reason behind the anger as well.

Just how Kuroono had protected her, she was also protecting him. And if someone so precious to her got hurt, she would either get sad or angry obviously.

“If you’re going to take him with you, then I won’t chase you.”(Sariel)

“I see.”

Just saying that, she turned away from Sariel while embracing Kuroono.

“Now then, please go die.”

The wings on the girl's back flickered.

As Sariel sensed the fluctuations in magical energy, the next moment, 10-odd balls of light shot out from her rainbow wings.

It's not a beam so they were not at light speed, but they were still many times faster than Kurono's bullets. Sariel, realizing the high speed, moved her body to dodge them, at that moment, she saw the trajectory of the balls of light get slightly changed.

("Automatic-tracking ability.")

Even when she kicked the ground to fly in the air, the balls of light clearly captured her motion and bent instantly at a right angle and corrected their trajectory.

("Very high level, no choice but to shoot them down.")

Sariel who landed on ground gripped the spear handle with her blood stained right hand.

It was already at a much lower condition than normal and furthermore, it was even damaged fatally by Kurono's poison.

Although she didn't want to use this since she wanted to avoid putting stress on her right wrist, but the only way to intercept those light balls was to use both her hands.

"Fast—"

Releasing a small voice, she stuck out her white spear with speed even higher than the approaching light balls that were in front of her.

The instant the spear pierced through the balls of light.

The compressed light magical energy released pure destructive energy.

A blinding flash and a shockwave strong enough to rip off limbs attacked Sariel, but without swaying even a single bit, she kept on destroying the balls of light.

"nn..."

When she pierced through the last ball, the spear in her hand was also smashed to pieces and disappeared.

As the storm of flashes and destruction finally settled down, the grass lawn that she was supposed to be standing on had been gouged out and bare earth could be seen.

The only place where grass remained was where the sole of her feet were standing on.

“.....ran away.”

As she looked, the figure of the girl was nowhere to be seen.

She was seriously trying to kill Sarel, but she must have prioritized Kurono's safety and left this place.

The moment she thought that, a chill ran down her spine similar to when she had faced the Dragon King.

“!?!”

Above her, a magic circle drawn with white lines of diameter 10m, suddenly appeared.

Letters of the Ancients or age of gods were drawn along with an unknown figure in the centre of the circle, but Sarel currently did not have the leisure to calmly analyze it.

“—Light wing God shield – Aralux Aegis”

Sarel used her strongest defensive spell and wings of light spread out and covered her whole body.

At the same time, a mass of light with the same diameter as the magic circle came down from above.

A seven-coloured torrent of light, having the same strength as that of a Dragon's Breath, swallowed Sarel.

Chapter 57 – The Last Return

It's been 3 months since I have become an adventurer, the quests I have taken were Rank 1, therefore weren't dangerous. Even so, I studied my Black Magic every day and night.

To me, black magic is my most reliable power to live in this world.

Furthermore, the research and development for the study of magic became a hobby for me.

The imagination is crucial to activate magic.

There are various categories within magic like the magic I use can only be used by the person himself 'Original', the magic used by Lily which can be used by people from same race 'Extra' and the magic used by Aten and other many magicians known as 'Model'. They all can't be activated unless a clear imagination is made in mind.

A countryside person and on top of it a rookie adventurer like me, the only thing I can do towards the research on my magic is to just deepen my imagination and understanding of magic.

By the way, the Model magic can be used by anyone with magic power present in them. It is originated from theories close to that of science and maths after all.

I gave up on learning the 'model magic', because to learn the model magic with the power equivalent to that of my "anti matter", it takes at the least 2 years of training to learn it.

In the first place, this world's the chanting for it and it's original pronunciation

“ال صلب ال ج ل يد درع ال باردة ت جم يد منع هيروشي ك يكو”

is completely non-understandable to me

Most probably, I came to understand this world's language thanks to remodelling, but from the rules of automatic translation that occurs inside my brain the chants have been left out.

On the contrary, the normal conversations and characters are 24×7 all year long being automatically translated, so it's impossible to learn the language.

If, I had talent in primary color magic, I can use it without even chanting, but seems like there was no talent inside me except for black magic. [ET: SO lame~ pfft.]

Therefore, I stopped learning about the Model magic and decided to use my Original magic as my only weapon.

And so I invented the “Magic Bullet “Bullet Art”” and “Magic Sword”Sword Art””. [ET: SAO anyone... and MAO anyone>>>??<<<]

There is no effect like dramatical increase in power or any new effects were made but by using it in battles, I can feel “It’s gotten easier to use it” effect like the improvement in “Activation sequence” “Accuracy Management” and “Magical energy Requirement ”

The ‘magic bullet’ is just a general term for the attack magic I’ve made taking ‘buckshot’ and ‘anti matter’ as center. the “magic sword” is the improved version for “automatic fencing” which can, at will, use blackened swords without using my hands.

In addition if I use the “magic bullet” with “black ballista” and the ‘magic sword’ with cursed weapons, then the offensive power will rise exponentially.

Other than that, I’ve made defensive magic before like ‘Shield’ and ‘Baphomet’s Embrace’ which by wearing it, my defence has gradually gotten better.

Compared to the first fight with Sariel, this time I had a lot of useful equipments and my offensive power had risen too,

But, even with all that I was still no match for her.

Holding onto a rope of hope, I on my own will entered the fight, but still Sariel went easy on me so as to not kill me.

The model magic’s offensive magic and defensive magic is commonly used as “Ignis Sagita” and “Ice Shield”.

But, Sariel activated the “Sagita” and “Shield” separately which meant that it’s power was reduced to half.

Sariel must have analysed that her half power of her normal would be enough to take the fully equipped me head on.

There's no way I can win against her. No matter with how much I attack her with the will to do or die, she can just play with me like a child.

Weak, Yeah, I was weak.

It's still fine for me to fight to protect myself but when Sariel and Crusaders came to Pandora continent, the power to protect the Irz Village along with Lily was just too insufficient in me.

To protect other people too, more power is needed. If you say it's obvious, then yes it is.

But, I understood that obvious thing just now.

I want to become stronger, I want more power, when I think that, i regret for not crave for power from start. Now that i think about it, it's my first time ever to think like this.

"-Kuronono!"

With my name called, I woke up from my dream to see the face of Lily.

"Lily.....Good Morning"

"Good Morning, it's night although."

When I look around, it's inside some forest. In the sky, a moon much bigger than earth's version is brilliantly shining,

I also realise that I'm sleeping on Lily's lap.

Moreover, Lily was in her little girl form so it will look like her embracing my head only.

"Am I alive?"

I rise up and murmur.

I recall everything till the moment I fell unconscious

"I carried you and escaped to here."

"I see, Thank you"

"I've also retrieved all the weapons too"

When I closely look, the cursed hatched 'Tsujigiri'(lit. Serial Killer) is leaning against a tree.

To think that she even had the time to retrieve weapons with her opponent being Sariel. But now it's not the time to think about it.

"I thought to protect you, but ended up being protected by you, I'm so uncool."

“I’m happy that you tried to protect me, but from now on don’t fight alone with opponents you can’t win against. Whenever there is danger for your life, I will be by your side. After all, I’m your partner, aren’t I?”

“That’s right, Sorry, now I won’t do something so reckless–”

That’s right, Lily is not someone I have to protect one sidedly but she is my partner whom I can leave my back to.

On my own will I go away from her to protect her, and in the end I get protected, there is no other thing more pitiable than this.

And I have unlimited words to thank to Lily.

“–by the way, Lily’s way of speaking is different, right?”

I once again look seriously at Lily, she looks like a small girl, but the words flowing out of her mouth are really fluent.

As if, I’m talking with the young girl form of Lily.

“Un, right now my consciousness returned to the same way it is at the time of full moon nights”

“Only consciousness?”

“That’s right, because I have something to tell to you as soon as you wake up. I can’t explain information too with the mentality of a child, right?”

“Is, is that how it is.....”

Having said that, I feel an extraordinary uneasy feeling from Lily.

I almost carelessly thought of asking her whether her usual behaviour was just an act?

“Muu, I doesn’t feel like you are accepting it?”

“Don’t mind it, and tell me what you want to tell me.”

“Kay, I don’t have much time so I’ll start first.”

“First, It’s already been 1 day since you fainted.”

It’s not like I used all my magic power, and still was out cold for 1 whole day, looks like I was really hit with great force on my head

“And here is between the woods at the foot of Riol ridge. I don’t know whether they are chasing us or not, but on the outskirts of Riol village there are many humans in white uniforms roaming around. It’s better if you don’t try to go to highway or the village.”

“I see, looks like it’ll be a detour for the way back to home.”

Even though Sariel was letting us leave, but even she can't help it if soldier find out about the fact that a fight broke out there.

"Still, how did you carry me till here"

"When I saved Kurono from in front of her, I was in my original form."

"her you say , are you talking about Sariel?"

"Un. that idiot woman"

Lily you're face is scary, don't make such angry face in the little form.

"Looks like it's true she killed the Dragon King. Anyway, there is no doubt she is ridiculously strong, so kurono must not fight people like her from now on, I also don't want to get involved with likes of her."

"Aa, I got it, and looks like there will be no 'next' too."

I doubt there will be another chance to fight with Sariel anymore.

After all my Assassination plan was ruined, I now need to think about what to do from now on.

"Well, let's return to Irz village fast."

After telling the news about the death of Dragon King and the possession of Daedalus, I need to prepare for running to another country.

Around this area there is no more hope, but if it's Irz village near the western end, they still have time to run.

"nee, Kurono"

"Nh?"

"The magic I used to return to my original form, I had saved it as an emergency measure. The one that can use it is only the child form of mine and it's complete coincidence that it succeeded and it also takes time. It's mostly due to luck that I'm able to talk to you, that's why don't do something like this ever again."

"Yeah, I got it, Sorr--"

Lily jumps into my chest.

"I was really worried."

"-Sorry, Lily"

For a little while, i embraced Lily while patting her head.

Putting Lily in my hood, I run up the highway in full speed.

The capital city is overflowing with soldiers, so I had to take a detour through the forest which took me a lot of days to complete.

Using that I came near the center of Daedalus territory and soldiers were also not visible so I went ahead to use the south-west highway.

I keep on running except for time to eat. Not stopping for any village that passes by and even cutting the sleeping time.

Still it's impossible for Lily to cut her sleeping hours, and was sleeping on my back just a while ago.

Even so, I want to give her a comfortable sleep at bed, but I need to go to Irz village as soon as I can, and this thing even Lily understands.

And at last, we came to Kuar Village.

Naturally, I had thought of passing through here without stopping, but there a lot of commotion coming from there.

"Did something happen over there?"

"?"

Along with Lily who also didn't know about what was happening, I decided to move towards the centre of uproar.

The plaza was full of people.

If it was just that, I would've agreed that they are getting prepared for the summer festival but, the people in plaza were holding up luggage and were having tired expressions.

They are getting water from the vigilantes of Kuar village and getting first-aid for their injuries.

"Excuse, did something happen here?"

I asked one kuar villager in the plaza

"I don't know what happened, but they have escaped from Irz village."

"Eh?"

"They have been coming here one by one and by the morning it was a really big deal. The vigilante corps are also patrolling here and there, just doesn't feel right around here."

Now that I think about it, the faces of people in the plaza are known to me.

The moment I confirmed it, I rushed up to the plaza and shouted.

“I’m Kurono, an adventurer from Irz Village, what happened in the village tell me please!”

“Kurono.....Yeah, i have seen you”(random villager)

“Oo, Lily-san is also here.”

After giving responses like that, some werecats stand in front of me.

“Irz village was attacked by human’s army.”

The moment I heard those words, though I didn’t want to believe it, I understood the situation.

“We also don’t know about the details, but last night a human army attacked us and the escape order was given out, so we in a hurried and ran up to Kuar village. Near the north-west highway many flames were present and explosions were also heard, most probably the vigilante corps have been fighting there.”

“Last night.....”

“The only ones here are the ones who lived near the south-west gate, most of the villagers are still not here. Hey! you are an adventurer right, can you go and save villagers, no you can just go to see what is happening there, it will take more time for Kuar village’s vigilante corps to move—”

The surrounding people too look at us with eyes full of expectations.

“Yeah, leave it to us, we will definitely save the villagers!”

Please, please everyone be safe! [ET: 2 times please is not a typo.]

With expectations, I run with my all power towards the north – west highway to reach to Irz Village.

Kuro No Maou

- Volume 5 -

Irz in Flames

Chapter 58 – March of Greed

The time goes back to several days back to the time Kurono has his reunion with Sariel. The Crusaders had departed to occupy the villages.

The centre of the army was the the private army of either the church or a nobility departed from the home country.

The already occupied Daedalus, at the time of occupation, tried to skillfully tell about the situation to village heads of other villages.

And the Crusaders stationed troops, they would be able to get the villages both in name purpose and their real purpose. If the remnants of defeated army won't start a rebellion, then blood won't be spilled.

But everything doesn't work so easy in real life. The Crusaders composed of many purposes individually, acted just as Kurono suspected.

Stealing, Destroying, Killing, the Crusaders did the cruel acts under the name of divine punishment and continued doing it without any remorse and hesitation.

From now on numerous villages within Daedalus territory will be massacred and looted and in the end destroyed. Furthermore the one village walking on the cruel path of fate with those villages was Irz village which Kurono loved.

Along with the sunset in the Gallahad mountain range, the army of people wearing white costumes start marching.

Wearing cross around their necks, wearing chainmail under their long white surcoats, donning broadswords and spears in hand is the infantry equipment of Crusaders.

They formed a line and marched, the one leading them is a young priest sitting on a conspicuous black horse named Kievan.

The appearance with white skin, blond hair and blue eyes, is very common in Syncrea Republic.

As he is a white magician, his robe is decorated with various magic items and it's appearance stands out.

"It has gotten considerably dark."

Running parallel to Kievan's horse, his aide Corvus speaks.

“What is it? Are you scared about marching at night time?”

“No, the highway is also maintained well, I doubt there will be problems.”

“Yeah, it’s nicely done even though they are demon races.”

Inside Kievan’s speech there is obviously scorn included.

There are many countries in Pandora continent and they without exception call humans along with other races collectively as ‘people/person’.

But however, in Syncrea Republic it is common for all races to be denominated differently, and the believers of cross discriminate others with their ideals of *‘human have the supremacy’*.

It was natural for Kievan a fundamentalist of Cross Religion to have hostility and evil intention towards all those living within Pandora continent. [ET: wut is he, huh? Doesn’t he know that people like him always get their ass beaten]

“According to plan, we will reach Irz village soon.”

“No need to rush, just to gain control of a small village in the countryside, we have plenty of time of 1 whole night.”

The mission given to Kievan’s force was to seize control of Irz Village, but it wasn’t something important that it was to be done fast.

Because, this mission of Crusaders going along the north-west highway seizing control of various other villages was not a job for being conspicuous neither the results were important. On this Kievan said “Please leave it to me!” and that’s how this missions was forcefully established.

A normal priest won’t burden himself with such a needless job, but Kievan who made it to the priest’s position in young age the so-called ‘elite’, couldn’t remain patient and wait for an opportunity for him to show his deeds.

In short, he was eager to do good deeds. [ET: Good deed here mean the deeds that seem on good to him.]

The Crusaders current situation was to to possess all of the large Daedalus territory. When he thought that the soldiers and clergymen will take away all the good opportunity for accomplishments, it couldn’t be helped that he panicked.

“With this, I can now stand with the priests with one accomplishment. If I can get a much bigger accomplishment, then Cardinal Mercedes will also remember me, isn’t that right?

“Yes”

“By the time this expedition is concluded, I would at the very least be promoted to a High Priest. Naturally, I would grant you, my right hand, a suitable position too... In addition after that, depending on my accomplishments the seat of Archbishop, no, the Cardinal will also not be a dream anymore. This mission will become a great stepping stone towards my big goal–” [ET: Police! Psychopath escaped & Spotted in Pandora Continent !]

Kievan expresses a daring smile. At the same time, in the front of highway faint lights of Irz village was present.

17th day of Shinyou Month, Late at Night.

“Uue, did I drink too much.”(incompetent)

The members of Irz Blader as usual don’t speak a words towards him due to sympathy.

“Nyarko-san is looking at you Nino.”(Aten)

“Don’t lie Aten, today is an off day so she hasn’t come to Guild today”(incompetent)

“Why do you even know that?”(Aten)

“It’s because I heard it the previous time we talked!”(incompetent)

“Ah, that time when you tried to ask her out for date, but in the end, you got scared and couldn’t ask her–”(aten)

“Don’t REMIND ME!”(really REALLY big incompetent)

“Well it’s good, we were worried that Nino had changed to the rumoured ‘STALKER’ class.”(aten)

“What the hell is a stalker.”(Incompetent stalker)

“It seems like it’s used for the creepy ass males who chase after a girl without being noticed and observe them the whole day and night”(Harry)

“That is neither a class nor a job”(incompetent creepy ass stalker)

“They even say that those creepy asses, even scavenge through the girl’s garbage. It’s really creepy ah scary~~”(Harry)

“Eeh, that really is creepy and sick”(Aten)

Aten and Harry look with worried eyes towards Nino

“Don’t look at me with those eyes! I haven’t done it yet!”(.....[I don’t have words to name this ‘person?’])

“What do you mean by not yet!?”(Aten)

“AH no, right now, just left the mouth, it’s that, erm—”(:|)

Aten and Harry get away from Nino, even the always cool Claydor also left his seat.

“If you do perverted deeds towards guild receptionist, the party will also be dissolved.”(Aten)

“Worst case, we will be banned from entering the guild and have to take collective responsibility”(Harry)

“That will be a problem”(Aten)

“You bastards what are you worrying about!! I won’t do something like that!!” (:| :|) [ET: will he remain convicted on his statement yes or no, find out more by scrolling down.]

Nino stomps the table with *bam* and stands up in anger.

“Calm down Nino, It’ll be bad if we get seen by Nyarko-san”(Harry)

“Like I’m saying Nyarko ain’t here!”(:| :| :|)

“Is there something about with me?” (Nyarko) {ET: sorry for many of my notes, but O.O. this idk wut species got doomed}

The moment the voice entered Nino’s ears, his tail and ear get started and stand up

That was the reaction when a werecat is Surprised!!

“Wh,Why, are you here?”(:|)

““Why you say, isn’t it because it’s my work.”(Nyarko)

“I know that much!” Nino couldn’t say that.

“Ah, now that I think about it, my sister said to change her shift with Nyarko-san as she was ill.”(Harry)

“Harry! Tell me that thing first.”(let’s go back to incompetent ass hole)

“Do tell senpai, to get better soon~”(Nyarko)

“Yes, I’ll tell her”(Harry)

“Now, Nino-san”(Nyarko)

“Y,Yeah!? what is it!” (Nino)

Aten quietly stares at the Nino who looks really pitiable with his voice quavering.

“It’s alright to make noise at the completion of quest, but please try to refrain from being too excited that you would unsheathe a sword.”(Nyarko)

“Ha,Hahi…….”(……………)

Looking at Nino dejected and lowering his tail and ears, even members decided to follow him up.

“Well, Nyarko-san we both drank too much ,It’s not NIno’s fault can’t you forgive him”(Harry)

“Ah, sorry, I was going with the flow and—”

Somehow fixing up the situation, Nyarko left towards the counter.

But Nino’s high spirits were falling down to death, as he showed his uncool side to Nyarko. [ET: was he even cool to begin with!?!]

“It’s over. Let’s head back for today.”(……………)

Nino speaks after drinking a cup of alcohol.

His mood and face color both are not good looking.

“Nn, well, Don’t worry about it too much”(Harry)

“It’s alright, you would have forgotten it by tomorrow, right?”(Aten)

Nino left his seat while staggering.

“Shall I send you home?”(Claydor)

In contrast to Nino, Claydor stands up firmly and steadily.

“Yeah, sorry for all the troubles.”(Nino [I felt bad for him.])

“Don’t worry about it.”(Claydor)

Both left a lot of silver coins on the table and left the guild.

“Fuu~, the night wind feels good.”

While saying such words, Nino and Claydor walk.

It’s not unusual for them to be going back home together , it’s normal in their everyday life.

It was supposed to be like that, but Claydor notices something different from usual first.

“Isn’t it a little noisy ?”

“An?”

Now that he said, there definitely are voices of people.

Once they know that something is happening they can easily find it's source.

With curiosity they both walked towards the source of noises.

That was the door of the village where they had just completed the quest.

"What happened here? Did some monster come here?"(Nino)

In the vicinity of the gate, the vigilante corps were running with torch in one hand.

Nino gets that something bad is occurring here, and loses his intoxication and looks towards the village with the same seriousness that he shows in dungeon.

Claydor who also felt the same as Nino, finds his father's figure between the vigilantes and calls out to him.

"Pops, what happened here?"(Claydore)

"Oo, Claydor and Nino are here too."(claydor's pops)

"Uncles, it feels dangerous around here"(Nino)

If they both were kids, they would've been sent home in this situation but, right now they both are fine adult who contribute for the peace of the village.

Grint as a vigilante corp leader, as a father, looks towards his son and his best friend , and told about the current situation without any deceit.

"Some unknown army is approaching the village through the north-west highway."(grint)

"What!?"(....)

"Are they bandits?"(Claydor)

"We still don't know, we have send out the fast runners for scouting but they have yet to return."(Glint)

Shivers run down both their spines.

Even though they are rank 2 adventurers, they have passed the stage of a rookie and their instinct of sniffing out danger can't be compared to a normal person.

"I'll go and inform Harry and Aten. Claydor, you stare here with uncle and guard the gate."

"Understood."

“I request you Nino, there is no time for giving a request to the guild right now, so appeal to as many adventurers you can for cooperating in this case of emergency.”(Glint)

“Leave it to me!”(NINO!)

Nino like a gust of wind runs through the road he was just walking playfully.

“Damn it! I can only feel something bad’s gonna occur goddamnit!!”(Nino)

Chapter 59 - Irz in flames (1)

Head Shione had already lied down on her bed but the moment one of the vigilantes knocked on the door, she jumped back to her feet.

The village itself had not faced any incident for several decades now, but she had experienced emergency calling incidents countless times in her long life.

The village head called the person inside and heard the situation in her usual composed manner.

“.....I see. Then I’ll leave towards the gate at once.”(shione)

Even after hearing something shocking like a mysterious army marching towards here, she did not show any signs of astonishment or bewilderment on her face.

She hadn’t been living for so long just for show after all. She understood that even in emergencies, the head should always stay calm and composed first.

But still, just because no emotions were shown outside, didn’t mean that her heart was also calm.

As she prayed that no blood of the villagers be spilled, she put on her aged dark green robe and left the house with her long staff that had an emerald coloured stone embedded on its tip.

That robe and staff were battle equipment that she hadn’t used in a long time.

“Eh.....What does that mean?”

Nino, who should have returned with Claydor, suddenly returned back with a changed expression which surprised Nyarko and others, but without paying that any attention, he briefly yet precisely explained the situation to them, or rather, shouted in a loud voice so that every guild member could hear it.

Nyarko remained dumbfounded but Aten and Harry, and all other adventurers that were sitting and drinking, immediately started moving.

“Nyarko, hurry up and contact the Guild Leader and round up every adventurer here in Irz village guild!”

“I, I’m on it!!”

On Nino’s words, Nyarko ran towards the counter.

“Ah, maybe I should have asked her to run away.”(nino)

“What are you saying? Nyarko-san is also a member of the Guild. During evacuation, she would be second last to do so.”(harry)

‘And the last ones would be us’. Nino understood that without even saying.

“But, this time I’m really getting a bad——“

DODON!!

At that moment, a loud thunderous sound resounded in the guild, no, in the whole village.

“This certainly feels dangerous.”

“The sound came from the direction of the gate, right?”

“Shit! Hurry up and let’s go! Aten, Harry!!”

Each and everyone picked up their weapons and started running towards the gate.

“Anathema Hammer – Destruction Hammer.”

A Union magic used by 10 magicians together in cooperation, as its name suggested, smashed the Irz village gate into smithereens.

The vigilantes standing near the gate were blown away and instantly killed.

The village head who was coming towards the gate to talk with the mysterious army was protected from the blast by the vigilante corps leader by using his own body as a shield and somehow escaped being heavily injured.

Cries of pain and agony of the injured resounded in the dark night.

Even before the dust of the blast settled, the Crusaders dressed in white and with the man on a horse as its leader, boldly entered the Irz Village.

“Hm, there are quite a lot of demons here.”

Atop his horse, Kievan said as he looked towards the Vigilante corps with a scowl.

Among them, he saw an old elf woman with a long staff come towards him along with a giant lizardman.

He stopped the soldiers behind him, who were about to fire arrows, with a single wave of his hand. Along with his aide, Corvus, Kievan took a step towards them.

The surroundings were still noisy, but Irz village representative Shione along with vigilante corps leader Grint and Crusaders representative Priest Kievan and Deacon Corvus were still silent.

But, one side was due to fear and anxiety, and the other due to contempt and scorn. There was clear difference in their mental states.

“Are you the head of this village?” (Kievan)

The first to speak was Kievan, impolitely while looking down on Shione from the horse.

“Yes, I’m Irz village’s—”

“Don’t talk anymore. I’ll get corrupted if I talk to demons any more. What I’m about to say are the words of God. I’ll say only once so listen carefully. We, the holy Crusaders have killed the evil dragon Gaevinal and have liberated this land of Daedalus. And as per the wishes of our great Lord, this land will be offered to him.”

At those words, the Village head could only stiffen while widening her eyes.

Basically, the Dragon King Gaevinal had been killed by the human army called Crusaders and have captured Daedalus.

She knew they were fighting humans, but it was hard to believe that the powerful Daedalus army led by the Dragon King himself had been defeated.

“Oh my, it seems you don’t even understand what you have to do. It can’t be helped so I’ll explain in words you low-witted demons can also understand. Quickly bring all gold, silver, weapons, provisions, everything in the village and give it to us Crusaders.

Also, if there are any humans then bring them as well, I’ll specially treat them as slaves and let them live.”

A chill ran down Shione’s spine.

If they were thieves, then their eyes would be shining with greed right now. But in his eyes, Shione could only see a clear contempt. This man does not even have the guilt of ‘stealing’ things from others. He is already certain that everything here is his possession.

And it seems her instincts were unfortunately correct as well.

In other words, there was no scope for negotiations.

Shione decided, while apologizing to the Irz village that was about to be destroyed and to the people who were about to die.

“.....Grint, ring the bell.”

Grint clearly heard those simple words. At the same time, she shouted towards the sky.

“Ring the bell!!!”

GOONG! *GOONG!!*

The bell resounded throughout the village. It’s meaning was known by everyone in the Irz village.

Emergency situation and evacuate. That was the meaning behind the bell.

“Tch, don’t cause us trouble.”

Kievan said as he brought down his raised hand.

The moment the bell rang, he took it as a show of resistance and instantly ordered to attack.

Behind him, arrows were nocked, spears were taken in stance, chants of magic began, and the signal of battle was given.

And, a battle had started in the place Kievan stood as well. In front of him, stood Grint whose body had been pierced with numerous arrows.

“Fuun!”

Grint removed the arrows in his body forcefully with his bare hands.

The arrows had pierced even through the gaps in the scales but he defended against not with steel like scales and flesh.

Grint who belonged to one of the sturdiest race and was also a trained soldier, his life would not be in danger just because of some arrows.

“Demons really are uselessly sturdy. Truly repulsive.”

Kievan said with a bored expression. And with a shout Grint jumped towards him.

A lizardman who was much powerful than a human, could display charging strength equal to that of a whole human troop with his own body. And, currently, he was using it to its fullest.

“oooooooo— Charge!!”

With the activation of a martial art skill, an attack that could already pierce steel was powered up even further. And the spear that was going in a straight line to pierce Kievan was,

“Slash.”

It was reflected by the swing of a long sword.

To defend Kievan, Corvus had stepped in between.

“Is physical strength enhancement – Full Burst necessary?”(Kievan)

“No, something of that level, I can deal with my martial arts alone.”(Corvus)

Even after taking the powerful blow of the lizardman warrior Grint, Corvus replied calmly.

“I see, ضوء لمنع الأبـ يض الدرع — Lux Shield.”

The moment Kievan deployed his defensive magic, the shield of light was struck with a blade of wind.

“To think that even that old hag could fight. These demons really are troublesome.”

In front him, Shione stood who had fired the Wind Blade – Air Sagita.

“Too dangerous. I’ve decided Corvus, the demons of this village——”

Kievan laughed. Rather than getting gold, rather than making women into his slaves, killing evil demons was a much happier thing for pious follower of the church.

“——Annihilate them all.”

“Shit, Shiiiitt!!!”

Drenched in sweat and blood, with his blade that had started losing its sharpness, he stabbed his sword once more in another one of the soldiers dressed in white.

Nino had already cut apart 10 of them. But their numbers were only increasing instead of decreasing. And to top it off, everything was in flames now.

There was not a single soldier who could use a single martial art, but the difference in numbers was too big to cover with just his skills.

If it goes on like this, it’s only a matter of time before he will be surrounded by flames and enemies.

Nino, after the bell had been rung, was now running towards the gate that led to the north-west highway while defeating enemies that were coming up one by one.

But, maybe because the gate had been blown away, soldiers were appearing from beyond the darkness of the night.

“Nino! We can’t go on like this! Let’s return to the guild!”

You don’t even have to tell me that, but,

“Idiot! Claydor is still near the gate!”

“Calm down Nino. The vigilantes are also there near the gate, then we don’t have to go to reinforce them unnecessarily——”

I know that as well. The vigilante corps, that is the strongest force of the village, is already at the gate. It's not like much would change even if just we joined them.

No, maybe, attacked by such a big number, they might have been annihilated already.

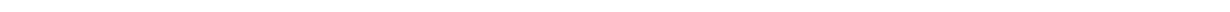
".....let's go back to the guild."

If we can't go to the gate then, the next thing we should do is regroup and collaborate with other adventurers and help in the evacuation of civilians.

Like that he could save people like Nyarko or anyone else.

"Sorry, Claydor....."

Looking back towards the burning gate one last time, Nino and the others started to go back the way they came.



Chapter 60 - Irz in Flames (2)

The gate towards the north-west highway was currently filled with the highest amount of people since the establishment of Irz Village.

In front of the overwhelming numbers of Crusaders, there's only a limit to how much time 50-some vigilantes could buy for them.

There hasn't been much time since the gate was destroyed, nevertheless, the most any vigilante could do was just keep on standing somehow.

People who were alive, that is Shione, Grint, and his son Claydor and some more vigilantes were fighting while protecting each other's blind spot. But, there was no way something like that could stop the Crusaders from entering the village. And steadily, many Crusaders had already reached the centre of the village.

Already, most of the village was on fire but the ones fighting here did not even have the time to even notice that.

"Oi, how long are you going to take to take care of that demon?"

"——ha, I'm truly sorry."

In front of Corvus who had just answered, a goblin, who had been cut together with his leather armor from the shoulder, had fallen.

As Corvus stood on the frontlines while fighting, he also gave out orders to avoid as many casualties of his soldiers as possible.

Whenever a soldier got injured or fatigued, he instantly made him switch with another one in the back. That way, he had reduced the number of casualties greatly even against the physically stronger demons.

Of course, for the vigilantes, it was situation where they felt that none of their attacks were working and the enemy soldiers were unhurt.

If the battle continues for 10 more minutes, sooner or later, a casualty will arise and then it'll become easier to annihilate them.

"No, that's enough."(Kievan)

But, not even wanting to wait for that little time, Kievan decided to remove this resistance with his own hands.

“Get back.”(Kievan)

The moment Kievan said that, the soldiers that were clashing swords, instantly retreated, and the circle of soldiers surrounding the villagers grew bigger.

“Evil demons, receive God’s judgement under my holy radiance.”(Kievan)

He spoke some pompous and exaggerated words but he is seriously thinking of killing the evil demons in place of God.

The Elf, Lizardman, and people of other beastmen races that were continuing to resist in front of him, just what kind of difference did they have from humans? What was supposed to be their sin?

But the believers of the church believed, that any other race other than humans was nothing but a sin in front of their God.

كلمة وعيه سرية م بكره محامية — Concentration enhancement – Conses Boost.”

قوية عناصر من العديد من ال — elemental enhancement – Element Boost.”

The magicians serving Kievan invoked enhancement magics. Under the effect concentration enhancement, the chant was shortened and more amount of magical energy could be compressed. And element enhancement turned the ‘light’ of the magic about to be activated much stronger.

“ال نار ان تشار الاب يض ي دمر حريق مشرق”

After just of a few seconds of chanting, the ‘holy light’ was finally released.

“Giant flash cannon – Lux Force Blast!”

Under the current Model Magic classified as an advanced level magic, it was a ranged attack magic of the light primary colour magical energy.

A magic that could have normally killed even a rank 3 monster, under the effects of the enhancements, became an even stronger torrent of light and attacked the vigilante corps.

ك - strong wind
protective wall – Air Wall Defence!!”

The village head mobilised the magical energy that had started to wither away, and deployed a shield covering everyone to protect them from the deadly light magic.

But she knew that it was impossible to defend against a advance level magic with an intermediate level magic. In the first place, a shield of air was at disadvantage against a light based attack magic in terms of elemental affinity as well.

As a result, the village head’s shield, and the reflexive action to defend themselves taken by the vigilante corps members, was not even able to half the damage released by Kievan’s magic.

“GYAAAAAAHHHHHHAAAA—-“

Kievan had already turned away as the cries of death rose and without a change in emotions asked.

“Oi, there seems to be another place where resistance is taking place, right?” (Kievan)

Having burned the vigilante corps to cinders with a single attack, he had already forgotten about them and moved to the next problem that required his attention.

The soldiers around him also seemed either happy or relieved that the demons’ resistance had been ended.

“Corvus, it seems some adventurers are cooped up in the guild to defend themselves. Let’s go and quickly crush them.”

“YES!”

On Kievan’s words, Corvus finally looked away from the corpse of the lizardman he had been fighting till now. He was the only one that was still thinking about the deaths of the demons.

(“Why did that lizardman warrior tried to protect that other lizardman? Do mere demons even have the will to abandon themselves to protect another?”)

The figure of the burnt corpse that lied on each other had been etched in his mind. But Corvus had no way of knowing that those two had been actually father and son.

“Don’t fucking joke with me! As if I’ll accept something like surrendering to them!”

Nino’s angry voice resounded inside the Guild.

“You’re the one who is joking around, look at your surroundings——“

Currently, the guild’s building had been completely surrounded by the Crusaders.

“——Even being thrown inside a goblin’s nest naked would have been much better.

So, how are we supposed to fight against them?!”

Another adventurer who was in the guild shouted back.

In the guild, adventurers that belonged to Irz village and those who just happened to be here were currently of different opinions.

The former were ready to resist till they die and the latter were insisting on surrendering.

Nino and the others who had a skirmish with the vanguard of the Crusaders had been suppressed through numbers making them retreat back inside the guild and then encircled them to trap them there.

Thus, a little time to argue had been given to them.

“You bastards can go fight with your life on the line because this your home village, but it’s not the same for us, we have no obligation to get ourselves killed here!”

“What the hell did you just say!!?”

“Pl, Please stop!!”

Nino who had grabbed the human adventurer was stopped by Nyarko.

Soon other adventurers also moved in to pull them apart.

The human adventurer then looked at Nyarko and said.

“Oi, the guild leader here is already dead isn’t he? Then there’s no order for a compulsory quest either so we have no obligation to fight. Well even if there was an order, rather than fighting such a battle, I would pay 100 gold or even 1000 gold to cancel it though.”

“uu.....ye., yes.....”

Nyarko had gone towards the guild leader’s house as per Nino’s instruction before the bell for evacuation had rung.

But in the middle of bringing the guild leader here, they were found by the Crusaders who had already started appearing here and there, and only Nyarko, who was fast due to being from a beast race, could safely make it back to the guild.

Although it couldn’t be helped considering the situation, Nyarko had been lamenting the fact that she had abandoned the guild leader in between.

“Do you understand? We don’t have a reason to fight, don’t try and stop us.”

“.....Shit.”

Nino was also an adventurer. He could understand the man’s logic.

“Then go, I’ll stay here and fight.”

“No need for you to tell me, I’ll go.”

The human adventurer threw his sword on the table since he was about to surrender.

Along with him, almost half of the adventurers in the guild threw away their weapons and moved towards the entrance of the guild.

“Wait.”(nino)

“What, still got any problem?”

“.....take Nyarko with you.”(nino)

Nyarko was about to say something but was stopped by Nino’s gaze.

“We’re the only ones that need to fight and die.”(nino)

“Nino-san....”(nyarko)

“It’ll be fine. If you obediently surrender, they won’t kill you. Also, even if you are caught, Kurono’ll probably come to save you.”

That’s not the place where you take the name of another man—Aten, who was standing beside him, thought but did not actually speak.

But, if it was Kurono, he’d probably fight together with us, she thought.

“Re, really, all of us should surrender together—“

To Nyarko’s appeal, Nino smiled wryly and answered.

“Ah, I’ve already killed 10 of their men, they won’t let me live anyway.”

When she looked towards Aten and Harry she again received wry smiles.

“Bu, but—“

“Come on, hurry up and get going, you don’t know when the enemy will burst in!”

This situation will obviously not continue forever. If the group outside decided to start their assault, they will lose their chance to surrender as well.

“See ya, Nyarko.”

“.....yes, Nino-san, everyone,.....may the fortunes of war be with you.”

With big tears flowing from those eyes, Nyarko left with that group of adventurers.

And, Nino will soon realize and regret that this was the worst decision ever.

Kievan moved through the group of white soldiers as if going through a white colored wave.

In front of him was the biggest building in this village, the adventurer guild.

“What happened, why are you not attacking it already?”

Kievan asked the commanding officer of the troops standing in front of the entrance with a slight irritation in his voice.

“Yes, the enemy has multiple magicians who can use mid level magic and there were many soldiers with high skill as well, so attacking with just soldiers would be reckless and danger——“

“Basically, you got scared, is it?”(Kievan)

On being glared from above, the commanding officer hanged his head with a – “I’m extremely sorry.”

“Well whatever. The adventurers of the demons are strong people who possess brutal strength that they can hunt monsters with only a few people, or so I have heard——“

As he remembered the figure of the elf or the lizardman that he had sent to oblivion, he understood that if that sturdy body of the demons was further supplemented by strong magic, they could show abilities stronger than humans.

“Well even I want to avoid useless deaths in my army. I’ll value your decision to wait for the reinforcement of magicians.”

Thank you very much – as he said that the commanding officer finally breathed a sigh in relief thankful that he had avoided the anger of a Priest. But soon he saw Kievan’s look filled with anger again as he(Kievan) noticed something.

“What is that?”(Kievan)

In his line of sight were a few people that were slightly armoured but without weapons and were raising their hands and shouting something.

They were currently standing exactly in the middle of the space between the Crusaders and the entrance of the guild.

Kievan was had asked, but even without listening the answer, he was well aware of what it meant.

“Yes, they are ones that just came out of the guild saying that they are surrendering——“

“You fool! I can see that as well!! Why haven’t you killed them yet?!”(Kievan)

“Th, th, that’sbecause among them there are a few that look like humans so.”

“Kill them.”

“bu, but, the headquarters had ordered to take humans as prisoners.”

“Shut up! They are demons! And heretics that live along with demons! Their existence itself is blasphemy towards god! They must be dealt with immediately!!”

For Kievan, the very fact that there was a human mixed with them was unforgivable.

The humans living in Pandora and the humans living in Arc continent, he might have claimed them to be another type to demons if they had looked different just like Asians looked different from Western people in Kurono’s world.

But in truth there was no difference in the appearance of humans in this world. One could tell that someone was a human in a single glance.

Therefore, humans who were the supreme creation of god, to have lived along with demons, that fact alone was discomforting for Kievan.

As the commanding officer had said, if he were to follow the orders of HQ, the humans who had surrendered were to be taken as at least prisoners of war.

But, for Kievan it was more important to adhere to the teachings of his god rather than follow the orders of HQ. Thus, he took the decision without even a single hesitation.

“Ready your aim——”

Kievan moved even further as he gave the order.

Under the orders of the highest position in this place, the soldiers quickly took action.

Bowmen nocked their arrows, magicians started chants for attack magics.

And in front of the Crusaders who were clearly taking offensive measures, the group that had left the guild to surrender were overcome with fright.

“O, Oi!? Please wait—-“

The adventurer spoke which sounded more like screaming but, Kievan only wanted to kill these defenceless people instantly. He would never listen to their pleas.

“Fire.”

Chapter 61 - Irz in Flames (3)

The scene that occurred in front of him, Nino, no every adventurer of Irz village that had remained in the guild, were unable to understand what happened for a second.

The moment a man on a horse, probably the commander, came, every one suddenly lifted and readied their weapons.

Without even trying to listen to their pleas, the army fired flame magic and arrows upon them.

Arrows pierced their bodies, and the moment they fell on their knees, innumerable fire arrows – Ignis Sagita rushed in and burnt them all to smithereens.

That included Nino's crush, who he just talked to, Nyarko as well.

The always cheerful poster girl of the Guild, her lovable figure was nowhere to be found.

"A a——"

Surprise, sadness, anger, all sorts of emotions swirled inside their heads, and nobody was able to say a single word.

"Uaaaaaaaaaaaaahhh!!!!"

All that left the throat was a violent and furious scream.

The adventurers here finally realized that the opponents neither had any compassion nor did they leave any scope for negotiation, they were simply murdering demons.

And we will also be killed by those demons, but,

("that guy")

The commander that ordered to attack those defenceless people who had surrendered.

("just that guy")

""""I'll kill him!!""""

Adventurers twisted with anger and madness, picked their weapons and jumped outside.

Without thinking even a single bit about what would happen next, about their own deaths, they simply swore in their hearts to kill that commander of the demons.

It was daybreak.

The light of the sun shined on the Irz village but the black smoke covering it had not yet cleared away.

Underneath that cloud of smoke, was a painting of hell filled with the stench of corpses created in just a single night. In the burnt down houses, piles of corpses had been created, but compared to a few hours ago during midnight, it had become a mountain of corpses.

A mountain of corpses was created, meaning not a single death cry resounded in the village anymore.

Currently the army was hurriedly collecting the valuables and also searching for demons that might have hidden till now.

This situation was seen by Priest Kievan, who was also the commander of this force, with a somewhat satisfied look from the window of the conference room on the top floor of the guild.

“And, what did you want to talk about?”

Kievan looked back at his aide, Corvus, who was standing in attention.

“Yes. Near this village there exists a place called as Fairy Garden.”

“Fairy is it?.....Then”

“It is as you think. Most probably there is a fountain of holy water there.”

Holy water was a famous item that every follower of the church was aware of.

Water that holds the power of god. Strictly speaking, it was fresh water that held large quantities of white magical energy.

Normally, it is a magic item made by white magicians for Priest and above rank, but occasionally, places where it naturally exists also appear.

In the Arc continent, places where holy water 'naturally' appears is treated with extreme importance.

White magic was equal to the power of god but a place where it is naturally appearing meant that a power other than the god's was also working there. Basically it was a holy place.

But, the religious reasons aside, being able to collect large amount of holy water had many benefits.

Holy water was required in rituals, if used with white magic, it could display various effects as well.

From a magician to a simple believer, everyone had many uses for it.

Thus, a place where holy water naturally came was equal to finding a gold vein for the church.

Kievan who was seeking achievements in the conquest of Pandora continent, he had no reason to leave it alone.

"It seems to be called the fountain of light around here, and is located in the deepest portions of the forest, also it seems any race other than fairies are not allowed to enter."(Corvus)

"hmm, then there is no doubt."(Kievan)

Places where holy water comes forth is a place fairies live is a legend even the children in Arc continent know about.

And, that it was not just a legend but an actual fact, Kievan had once read it somewhere.

"I believe we should quickly depart to secure it."(Corvus)

"Corvus, I'll leave this case to you. Take those necessary for the search party from among the force."(Kievan)

"Thank you very much, but, I'll end up taking most of the magicians. Would that be fine?"

“Of course, Swords won’t work much against fairies after all. Most of them have healed up too. As long as my two disciples are here, it’ll be more than enough. I don’t care if you take all the rest of them. It’s an important matter after all.”

“I understand. I shall definitely gain control over that place.”

Both Kievan and Corvus knew that they would need to fight the fairies living there.

In the Republic, compared to other demons, the feelings of contempt towards fairies was still common even though they looked pretty. But the fairies held much more magical energy than humans.

If you underestimate them, you would be attacked by magics of various elements and will be pathetically blown to pieces.

But if they were to use trained magicians, and gather a big force as well, humans would not lose to fairies who are not used to fighting.

And, Kievan judged that the numbers required could be obtained from the force he had.

“Oh right, who did you hear this info from——”(Kievan)

“A man named Kische, he used to have an item shop in the village.”(Corvus)

“Ah, deal with him as required, alright?”

“.....but he is a human, is that fine?”

“Nobody will buy a man in his middle-ages, right? He is of no use. Above all, I can’t let a fiendish heretic who interacted with dwarfs to stay alive. It’s disgusting.”

“Yes, it is as you say.”

“Oh well. I’ll give the orders to deal with the man and his family. You should start towards the securing of the holy water.”

Acknowledging, Corvus left the place. Kievan looked outside the window again and smiled faintly.

Beneath him, in the centre of the village, a line of wooden crosses were standing.

On the crosses, foolish 'demons' who went against god, that is Nino and the other Irz village adventurers' corpses were crucified as an example and warning.

The mountain of corpses was tragic already, but they were ones to have been burned and buried. It was much better that being stuck on a cross as an example.

It was truly the death filled painting of hell itself, but Kievan it was nothing more than the first step towards his bright shining future.

The subjugation of Irz village, although a few casualties were taken, had been completed successfully and on top of it, finding holy water was an extremely big bonus.

Things were moving so well that he truly believed that he had been blessed by God.

Thus a smile, a smile had naturally come on his face.

Kievan, with a satisfied mood, made the sign of cross in front of his chest, and gave a prayer.

"Let my faith be seen by the heavens—"

Chapter 62 - Madness/Berserk

Halfway on the highway to Irz village, I saw a black cloud rising in front of me.

“Shit, they set the village on fire!”(kuroono)

Although I couldn't actually see whether the village was really burning or not, but there was no other reason for such a black cloud that I could think of.

Seeing that abnormality, I put more strength in my legs to run even faster.

At that time, I heard the sound of flock of birds flying away from within the forest on my left.

Lots of birds lived in the forest and it was very natural for a flock to fly together but, the number of birds I was currently seeing was a bit too big to be natural.

“Kuroono!”(lily)

Lily who was in my hood, pulled on my robe.

“What happened, Lily?”

“It's trouble, the fountain is——”

Stopping my legs, I tried to listen carefully to what she was saying.

Before I could hear what she was trying to say, I instantly understood it the moment I saw a cloud of smoke rise from the forest as well.

“Shit, have the Crusaders approached the fountain of light as well!?”

Why would they go there? Are they thinking that place has some treasure?

Lily jumped out from the hood, and starts running towards the forest.

“Ah, wait!!”

Even if Lily had been banished from the fountain of light, I know she still treasures it.

I don't exactly know what does the words 'Divine protection of the Queen' means for the fairies except that it makes the land dense with magical energy. But considering that fairies had disallowed any other race to come in, I can somewhat understand it.

The fountain of light, if it any other race comes in there or destroys it, the magical effect of the 'Divine protection of the Queen' would most likely disappear from that land.

Anyway, it's true that Lily and other fairies have to somehow prevent the invasion in some way or the other.

The Crusaders must have invaded the fountain of light with some objective and must have battled with fairies there. That should be the reason behind that smoke.

I don't have any reason to stop Lily from going; in fact I want to go assist her instead.

But, the smoke of battle is rising not just from the fountain of light but also from the village as well. I can't just leave that either.

"Lily will go to the fountain of light. Kurono should go towards the village."(lily)

".....is that fine?"(kurono)

The most important thing for me is the safety of Lily after all.

I realized just now, but I was pushing myself due to anger and impatience from the fact that the village was under attack but in the process I was exposing not just myself but also Lily to danger.

Of course, I'm not going to step back now, I'll definitely protect Lily.

But, letting Lily face the Crusaders alone is——

"It's fine! Believe in Lily!"(lily)

Lily is my partner, not someone I have to one-sidedly protect.

If she is asking me to believe in her, then I'll do what she says.

"Got it. But don't do anything rash."(kurono)

“Yes, Kuro no too.”(lily)

“n.....yeah, I know.”(kuro no)

That’s right, I promised Lily that I won’t do something reckless like challenging Sariel again after all.

“I don’t know how many Crusaders are there but considering they are moving as an army, it won’t be a number we can deal with alone. The moment we are done with our work, retreat quickly and we’ll regroup at Kuar village’s guild.”(kuro no)

“Un!”

Without exchanging anymore words, we ran towards our objectives.

Just what kind of hell was waiting for me, at that time I didn’t even have the composure to think about it.

All the houses built a bit separated from the village were either burnt down to ashes or were still being swallowed by fire.

On the highway, a large amount of blood was splashed here and there but not a single body could be seen. ‘The people who had bled so much had been carried away and were being treated right now’—I tried to cling on such wishful thinking.

But, the putrid smell of corpses in the surrounding utterly destroyed my wish.

The smell of corpses was coming from beyond the gate, from the centre of the village.

It proved to me that what was waiting for me beyond that fence was an unchangeable fact that a lot of lives had been taken.

“hah.....hah.....”

My legs finally stopped running at full speed, and I was walking unsteadily like a feeble patient on the highway.

Until now, I had seen a lot of deaths, in fact, I myself had killed many.

In front of the dragon, in front of Sariel, my legs would shiver with fear always. But then what is this that I feel in front of this scenery of the village painted in blood and flames? What kind of fear is this?

“What, the hell.....”

This village, this Irz village was, my only place of rest not connected to any fighting.

Why has that turned into this blood reeking place now?

I can't think. Something like this, I won't acknowledge, I won't believe it——
- as I stood there dumbfounded, I wonder how much time had passed.

Suddenly, seeing a certain scene, my legs stopped. It was a white soldier coming out of a house that had miraculously not caught fire.

That soldier was happily humming while holding something shining, probably silver coins, in his left hand.

After him, 2 more soldiers carrying a filled box also came out, again with happy faces.

The soldiers placed the box in the carriage like vehicle that was standing in front of the house. At that moment, a weirdly big *dosun* sound resounded from it.

The three soldiers were saying something to each other about the small door of the house which couldn't be entered without bending, and the 3 of them entered the house once again.

And the moment they came out again, inside my head that was dumbfounded and could not recognize reality, I felt something break and something snapped.

I finally became aware of the scene in front of me.

The three soldiers were carrying the corpses of goblins that were wearing plain clothes.

My ears caught some fragments of what the soldiers were saying.

“This was a miss—— only the child of a filthy goblin is here.”

“—if it was an elf woman then at least I could have enjoyed more.”

“We got money so whatever——-“

And, even roughly than the box, they threw the corpses on the wagon.

Those corpses belonged to Vats-san who greeted me every morning and his family.

“aaa.....”

The Irz village I wanted to protect, seeing the deaths of the people living there,

“uooooaoaaaaaaaaaaaaa!!!!”

I went into a mad rage.

Yes, I went completely mad.

After all, I finally realized that I had been too late.

In my left hand, the cursed hatchet [tsujigiri] had already appeared.

The feelings of hatred that I had suppressed with my blackening were flowing inside my head like a surging wave.

Normally, I would have reflexively resisted against that torrent of twisted feelings, but surprisingly it felt comfortable right now instead.

I couldn't differentiate whether this was my hatred or the hatchet's curse anymore.

But it ordered my body to move.

To kill every 'enemy' within my sight.

.

.

.

Lily sprinted towards the fountain of light located in the depths of fairy garden.

The term sprinting might be a little incorrect though. After all Lily who had the body like that of an infant, even if she enhanced her legs with magic like Kurono, she still would not be able to produce an effect like him.

Currently, Lily's body was covered with a sphere of light. With Fairy barrier – Oracle Shield activated, Lily was jumping like a grasshopper in high speed.

Jumping and crossing obstacles like fallen trees and rocks with ease, Lily looked like a white ball bouncing around.

And with a speed much faster than any human, Lily could feel the magical energy around her body getting denser with her body as she moved closer towards the fountain of light.

Normally, sensing Lily come this close, the other fairies would come to stop her but right now the figure of those shining small girls was nowhere to be seen.

Just a while back, the distant thunder like sound generated due to the use of an attack magic was the reason behind this.

The Crusaders that were advancing towards the fountain had been intercepted by the fairies.

In case, humans are allowed to invade to the 'centre' of the fountain, as Kurono had expected, the forest would lose the [Divine Protection of the Fairy Queen].

In that case, fairies will no longer be born here, and it would be similar to lose their hometown for fairies.

They must protect their home, the place where they were born, and the sacred land that has the divine protection of the queen.

Thus Lily ran, flew, hurriedly.

Quickly run towards her fellow fairies, and use her Extra magic, that was even stronger than normal fairies, and drive the humans away to protect this place.—Lily was thinking only about that.

But, the moment the density of magical energy crossed a certain level, that is, when Lily stepped into the place where the queen's divine protection was strongest, a change occurred in Lily.

“Protect.....”

Lily who had been moving like a bullet instantly decelerated.

“.....this place?”

Lily who was now only walking, the fairy barrier around her had already disappeared. Instead her body itself began to shine stronger.

“fufu.....how foolish.”

With every step she took, she literally became ‘bigger’.

Her limbs became longer, her chest swelled and became bigger, from the baby like body, it turned into a slender, curved, feminine body.

From a ‘cute’ child, she turned, no, grew into a ‘beautiful’ girl.

But, rather than her body, what changed more was her mind.

Lily took another step, her body growth had stopped but the change in her mind continued.

Her thoughts became clearer, but became more complex and at the same time her emotions, present situation, its advantages and disadvantages, what she could do, what she couldn’t, what should she do and what she shouldn’t—— When she finally stopped walking, the changes in Lily had all finally ended.

That was the true body of the girl that possessed flawless and absolute beauty as well as overwhelming magical energy and knowledge about her Extra magic.

An environment so rich with magical energy, that it allowed Lily to attain this form. This was also a part of the [Divine Protection of the Fairy Queen] that the fountain of light possessed.

As long as she was inside this ‘divine protection’, Lily could stay in this form forever.

“fufufu——-“

Outside she could only attain this body once during every full moon. Beauty that could make any man's breath away. She had only shown her pretty expression to even Kurono as well but,

“ahahaha!!”

The current Lily had an extremely violent smile.

“What kind of idiot would protect this place and those little bastards!?”

Something cruel like this could never be thought by the child like Lily but the current her definitely would.

The baby Lily, as her appearance, only had a pure heart, but returning to her original form, having the emotions, heart and thinking ability returned back to her, she had a cunning brain like that of a human and even had her own greed and desires unlike a fairy.

“ahaha, this is the best chance. With this opportunity, ——”

Kurono had not realized that the most fearsome thing about Lily in her adult form was not her use of incredible magic but her heart that possessed both good and evil.

“—let the fountain of light be completely destroyed.”

Chapter 63 – Fountain of Light (1)

That moment, the fight against the human army and the fairies stopped for a moment and the fairies return hurriedly towards the center of fountain of light.

“Lily.....what is that sham-fairy creature doing?”

The leader of the fairies of the fountain of light takes the lead of other fairies and flies off.

Unlike Lily those fairies are from the real fairy tribe and can fly with the two pair of wings on their back.

The sight of the light orbs flying through the trees and flowers of forest is so beautiful that even the people from this world with magic will also be deeply moved.

However, the true feelings of the the fairies themselves are worrying due to an emergency situation and their chest is about to burst from fright and anxiety.

“Just a little more—”

After passing through the forest, the fairies rush out towards the small fountain present in front of them.

This small fountain is the so-called “Fountain of Light”

Although the name has “Of Light”, in truth it is not radiating due to some effect from magic.

It is only sparkling due to the sunlight from the sky shining on the water surface. Too natural for such a majestic name.

But, in the vicinity of the fountain is thick density of magical power, so much that even a non-magician can sense it.

Due to that, this place that is located in the inner side of forest with a small fountain; it is truly a holy place with mystical feeling that can be felt through the mind and body.

And, standing in the middle of that fountain was ‘her’.

“Lily!”

In a really hateful voice, the leader of fairies called her name.

Lily has a body unbecoming of a fairy, in addition to it she is wearing clothes like a person, the black dress Kurono gave her, looking at her like that she gets angry.

“What are you doing here! You should know the situation right now!?”

Normally, she should have been fighting against the humans who were trying to invade here. She without a doubt emits hostility towards Lily floating elegantly in the center of fountain.

That is definitely not something to point towards the person she will fight together with.

Even though Lily is half magic beast, she also possess the fairies Telepathy ability, therefore Lily must have felt the animosity flowing from her and the surrounding fairies.

But Lily answers with a nonchalant face.

“Yes, it’s tough, the human bastards came attacking her in groups. I wonder will happen if they come her—-”

“Don’t speak anymore than that! There are somethings you can say and you can’t say!”

“This lands divine protection would be lost” even for fairies it was hard to forgive her for saying such a thing.

“Really, well whatever. Can you turn those humans back with just your forces?”

“Th, That is—”

“They have considerable amount of magicians prepared, and it doesn’t seem like the other party is not accustomed to fights. You can’t send them back in fear with just single shots, can you?”

“I know that much!”

“Un, you know right without me you will ‘LOSE’”

Lily words hit right at spot.

Though the fairies are blessed low in the mind department and they only play all the time, but even they have the intellect to judge to that degree.

“Tha, That’s right—Lily, I admit that we don’t stand a chance against those numbers of humans without you.”

“Un, so what?”

Lily grins, though it was without any ill intention, it's enough to get the leader in a rage.

"What do you mean 'so what'!? The fountain of light is in danger! So hurry up and fight against those annoying human bastards!"

"Eeeh~ what is with that sort of speaking? I doubt it's the way to request to someone? That's why you can't make a living out of township shrine meeting."

"Wha——"

The fairies are at a loss of words.

"What the hell are ya sayin!? You an idiot to speak such sick jokes at a time like this! Hurry and fight, protect this place!"

"You're annoying, shut up for a bit. Calm down and think how you fairies expelled me out of here when I was born. This might be a birthplace and holy ground to you but it ain't of much importance to me."

"What are you saying, isn't the holy ground an absolute thing for fairies, are you really thinking about it!?"

"'for the fairies' right. The ones who expelled me saying '*You're no damn fairy*' are you guys, right?"

"That is——"

"Aa, well I don't give a shit about it. It's not like I have a complex for not being a pure fairy and I'm not even thinking about becoming one. It's just that the half-human half-demon race me has different sense of values than you fairies....."

Lily once again smiles.

"And don't you think that when asking people you have say 'PLEASE' with your whole heart?"

"Wha, What are.....'please' you say?"

"That's right, isn't that important, I also don't want to fight for you guys like it's natural. Look, it will be better if you bow your head fast, the humans are near, right? "

The current Lily is in an advantage position and can sense the magical power of the Crusader in a considerable scope.

Even though it can't be seen with naked eyes, but Lily can sense them shortening their distance towards the spring while being precautions.

Though the fairies don't have the sensing ability on par with Lily but given the current situation they can't say that her words are lies.

Normally, the fairies who don't do much thinking, start racking their brains. They are racking their brains between the choices of not bowing before a sham-fairy due to their ego or bow their head and save their birthplace, the fountain of light.

It's obvious what is more important here, but the problem was bowing their heads to someone who was neither human nor fairy.

After a moment of silence, the fairies finally speak.

".....ase"

"Eh, Wha~t?"

Lily without changing her smiling face speaks in a lively voice.

"Please"

"I can't hear clearly."

""I request you. 'please' save the fountain of light!""

The sadness-filled voice of fairies, echoes within the fountain of light.

Lily after hearing that, replies with a bigger smile from before.

"Ufufu, Don't want to♪"

In an instant, silence spreads as if the the time has frozen.

The leader of fairies, speaks with her face down and shoulder quivering.

"H,Ho, How can....."

"I just said it, that this place ain't of importance to me."

"Tha, That's why we requested you, properly"

"Un, but I never said I would fight even if you requested me."

Lily didn't break her smile, in her eyes the happiness was overflowing.

"I will definitely not fight to protect this place, that's why, give up already~"

Upon the colds words by Lily, the fairies finally understood her true nature.

"Wa, wait, how can you....."

"I don't care even if we wipe out we will fight' or so if you're thinking you free to do so, I won't stop you."

"Wait!? Please, I'm sorry for everything! Please fight, PLEASE!!"

Without any shame and honor, the crying fairy clapped her hands as if to kill some insect.

The fairies of the fountain of light gathered here can only choose between either asking Lily for help or break down while crying.

After watching such expressions for some time, Lily speaks.

“Ah, right, you’re gonna be destroyed at any rate, so I’m gonna take the ‘Red Crystal Sphere **Queen Beryl**’ for myself as well, ‘kay?’”

The moment after hearing those words, the time for fairies once again stopped.

The “**Queen Beryl**” Lily declared to take, is the reason the fountain of light is full of magical power and it’s the source of divine protection deployed on this land by ‘Fairy Queen’s divine protection.’ It is a magic item, no, an artifact.

The ‘**Queen Beryl**’ is enshrined at the bottom of fountain in an altar.

That’s why, from that center the protection spreads in concentric circles and there is abundance of magical power in the surrounding area.

However, it’s not like if you place this Queen Beryl anywhere, it will make that place into a holy ground where fairies are born.

Unless there is ‘Ley Line’ filled with magical power flowing under the ground along with other magic-like conditions in union, the holy ground won’t be made, and without the complicated magic equation used by ‘God’ the effect of holy ground won’t be started.

In short, whether it be human or fairy, if they take the Queen Beryl from the altar, the complicated magic casted will stop and the holy ground will be destroyed.

If that happens, the magical power in the surroundings will eventually vanish and the fountain will turn into a natural fountain found at any place.

In other words, the fact she declared to take the Queen Beryl for herself, meant that she was going to destroy the holy ground by her hands, like throwing off the request from before.

“Lily! Have you gone mad!?”

“Don’t speak such rude things. The Queen Beryl is the perfect artifact for me to draw out magical power, isn’t it normal for me to take it if it’s gonna help me in future?”

Queen Beryl is not naturally the main item needed for the development of holy ground, but it’s just the key item that is needed.

If just the fairy queen hadn’t used it in creation of holy ground, its worth is only for its vast amount of magical power that resides in it.

Naturally, just because of that it is named as artifact, but it is something very important within this world.

“I won’t let you do that!”

All the fairies at once deploy the Oracle Shield and emit bloodlust towards Lily.

On the order of the leader, the several hundred elementary level Sagita will attack the slender Lily.

Naturally, Lily doesn’t even twitch while knowing it and speaks to the the fairies easily.

“Do you guys think you can win against me?”

Lily’s two pair of wings on her back start flickering, and she deploys her oracle shield.

Her barrier is more powerful and more bright than the barrier deployed by any other fairy, the difference in levels is obvious.

“Do you guys really think, you can stop me?”

Just like when Kurono uses the Bullet Arts, Lily suspends many white bullets in her surroundings.

These each white bullets, have the explosion power to blast off the fairies along with their shields.

Lily makes the exact number of white bullets as of the number of fairies present here.

“You see, I hate this place, I hate you all too. That’s why I will try to wipe out everything using this opportunity. But if you try to escape from here throwing away your pride and self-respect, I won’t chase you and won’t even shoot you from the back. Because you all also didn’t meddle with me when I left here, so I will also give you all that much of mercy.”

All the fairies start trembling.

Lily is serious, they can't persuade her here, and have no means of stopping the humans coming after them.

They cannot protect the holy ground anymore.

All that left is, whether they will live or die.

"The reason I have been honestly protecting this place from monsters and letting you all live was because I wanted it."

When Lily is away from the fountain she changes to the little girl form, and the resentment she had felt in her original form is vanished, even if it is not, the little Lily's brain is not capable of thinking such complex emotions, otherwise she would be afraid of the cruel end the revenge would bring and had never gotten revenge on them.

However, if she had gone to fountain of light on the night of full moon, she could've massacred the fairies and destroyed the holy ground. In the end, she never did such thing and never thought to do it.

"Ah, don't get wrong ideas, I'm just penting out my frustration of being expelled out of here. There isn't any deep meaning behind the act itself and will neither have any in my lifetime. The only times I thought to protect this place and protect you people is only when I'm a child. The point is, that instead of making problems with you guys it was whole lot easier to not make any problems for you. But you see—"

While speaking such, the fairies who couldn't who couldn't read Lily's emotions till now due to a strong Mind Protect casted on her, suddenly broke and the emotions flowed into the fairies.

"I, have got a person I love now." [ET: NOOOO~~~ my Lily!!!!]

That feeling had the image something hot, passionate and adhesion like.

Those emotions were like a slimey hot lava like feeling pouring inside the fairies.

Sure enough, the fairies gave thought to these feelings, and neither one of them thought that it was a pure hearted love struck heart feeling

"Since that person came, my sense of values changed, priorities changed, my world changed. You know my everyday became fun—"

".....That human"

The leader of fairies standing in front of Lily mutters.

When she recalls, she remember a filthy looking man stuffed inside an apple box fell from the sky inside the forest.

“Ah, now that I think about it, you were also there when I met Kurono.

Ufufu, you now know the person I love, au, I’m so embarrassed.”

The appearance of Lily, hiding her blushed face and swinging her head, can’t look anything other than a love struck young girl.

And it is not the appearance the one would show who is trying to wipe out the fairies life and birthplace.

Due to the really out-of-place actions, the fairies can only feel weird.

“I and Kurono, will live forever and ever with each other. That was the plan but looks like some bugs interfered. You fairies who live away from the the society probably won’t know, that the human bastards that are coming here are the invaders known as “Crusaders” and have come from different continent. Being chased to the place I live, I also have the same feeling as you people. And, Kurono hates those human bastards in white uniform to death, he will definitely kill many of them. Ufufufu so coool~~.”

“Lily.....what are you trying to say.”

Mixing up serious matter and the matter of the person she loves,the topic of Lily’s talk is derailed.

The fairies understand it without even wanting to, that, the Lily who has become in the young girl form can do logical reasoning but is not able to because she is infatuated with the man named as Kurono to a hell lot of extent.

“Ah, ehm, In short, the reason I’m taking the Queen Beryl is because it will help me in future, that is something I’ve decided by thinking about the future of Kurono and mine. First of all, by the hands of Crusaders the Irz village, no, the whole territory of Daedalus will be occupied. But the Crusaders won’t be satisfied with that, and will try to conquer the whole Pandora continent. Those bastards have come here to offer the Pandora continent to their so-called god “White God” just because he wanted it.

From now on, no matter where we run, we will eventually run into them , at that time the thing called ‘my power’ is important, right? You see I will

protect Kurono with this power until he massacres the Crusaders, only I will protect him!"

"....."

The fairies gave up speaking even a word now.

"I wish for Queen Beryl because I need power. Though due to your "Divine Protection" will be lost, at any rate it will be destroyed by the hands of crusaders, so you won't reject my idea, right? On the contrary, I will be relieved that the thing I hate the most will be destroyed. Now then, my talk is over, so what will you people do?"

She bluntly asks, as the fairies by now must have decided their actions.

"I have told you this much, everyone will silently move out of my way, right?"

The only thing Lily told them was purely her feelings, she didn't persuade the fairies at all.

But Lily, didn't have any splendid determination, she only had the a twisted love bearing inside her, it was obvious there is no chance to persuade her by the fairies' side.

From the start, the fairies can't win against a serious Lily, that is something they understood instinctively, they didn't have any choice in the first place at all.

Either escape from here, or 'needlessly' fight against Lily and die here.

They have already decided on their answer.

The fairies grieve and while crying, leaving the place one by one.

"That is good, you know, it's not like you will die if the holy ground is destroyed. It's all good if the fairies keep playing around the hills and fields around the area, like dimwitted brats, Ahaha "

"—Lily"

"Nh, you were still here?"

Many fairies have already escaped towards the horizon while Lily was seeing them off, but the leader of fairies was still standing in front of her.

There are 9 fairies surrounding the leader.

"Do you wanna die?"(lily)

Lily's tone of voice grows deep, while, the fairies present are assaulted by bloodlust by Lily for the first time.

The fairies freeze in fear and don't even try to budge a bit.

"I won't forgive you! DIEEEEEE"(fairy leader)

The fairies, at once release the attack magic towards Lily.

""Lux Sagita""

The chant-less lower grade attack magic of fairies, is their Extra magic.

Each fairy deploys 5 arrows, total of 50 light arrows deployed by the 10 fairies fly towards Lily.

DoDoDoN!

Great Flash and Explosions occur.

The Lux Sagita does not deals damage with the explosions, but it melts the target with it's high heat and drills into the target.

Even so the reason Explosions occur because the arrows collide with the Oracle Shield of Lily which causes the two magical powers to clash and explode.

They also don't think they will be able to defeat Lily with this, while predicting Lily's attack, the fairies spread out on the command of Leader. However, those actions are of totally no use.

The fairies do know that Lily is strong, but they don't the know exactly how strong she is and what sort of magic she uses.

After all, they have never fought against Lily even once.

Even though they understand that launching 10 Lux Sagita at the same time is totally easy for Lily, but they don't know that they all have automatic tracking that even Sariel couldn't dodge.

"Kyaa!?"

The Lux Sagita launched by Lily fly in separate directions and easily follows all the fairies and pierces them.

Unlike the time she shot at Sariel, Lily lowers the power to the level that even if it hits the fairies it only smashes their barrier.

The fairies are blown off due to the impact and fall down towards the fountain one by one.

Lily while floating looked down on them as they fell and created splashes like frogs jumping in a pond.

“UUuu.....”

The fairies only had their body wet due to water, but no one suffered even an injury.

They stand up from the water, and the moment they try to attack Lily

“GyAAAAAaaa!”

A sorrowful cry comes out.

Lily pierces the right palm of the leader at pin point with her extremely small arrow.

The fairy with the appearance of an antique doll and the size of her palm is just some centimetres.

The arrow pierces in a straight line, meaning there is no tracking ability added in it.

“Aaaaa, It hurts! It damn hurts!!”

The fairies come back to their senses, and run towards the leader writhing in pain.

Their aim is naturally, to use healing magic.

The fairies thought, that luckily the injury was not big enough to blast off the arm so it can be easily healed.

“It’s bad for all of you to not pay attention to the enemy, you know?”

Lily’s second arrow hits the fairy in the lead running towards the leader to cast healing magic.

The point the arrow hit, was the same as the leader the right hand palm.

The number of people crying and struggling on the water’s surface increases to two.

The fairies split in two groups due to an increase in the injured person.

“Total failures, even a rank 1 adventurer has better movements compared to you.”

Lily piercing at the same point two times meant that the speed at which the fairies were flying was enough for her to hit them at any spot without even using the automatic tracking ability.

Lily, with a disgusted face, shoots down the right palm of each fairy approaching the two injured people.

There were 10 fairies writhing in pain on the water's surface even before they knew it.

"It's like a child's play, did you people really think of fighting me with that level? Hey, did you guys really think about killing me?"

Lily approaches the still crying leader and sits in a crouching position while floating.

"The next shots will be directed to your left palm, then your right leg, and then your left leg"

"Uuuuguuuu~~"

"Do you still intend to fight? If you want me too, I'll shoot them all at once"

"Guuuu, I-I will kill yoooouuuu!"

"Then, I'll shoot."

A small flash of light flickered.

During the moment, just as Lily declared, a hole opened inside her left hand.

"Aaaaaaaaaa!!"

"Do you still intend to fight?"

"Uaaaaa, Wai—"

"Time to shoot again"

A flash of light flickered again.

A hole opened up on the back of her right leg.

"Ah——"

" " Please stop !! " "

Other fairies who floated in the surroundings, cried all at once.

"Did you guys really think I'll let you guys die without tasting any pain?"

However, the light had already been launched from Lily.

""

When the back of both her hands and legs were shot through, she leaked a voice of agony that didn't seem to be her voice anymore.

As Lily heard the cries and shouts of the fairies telling her to stop, she remarked with an indifferent tone.

“When you can’t even use healing magic just due to the pain inflicted from the bullets, don’t even think of fighting, because of you people it took me needless time.”

Lily stands up as she stretched out her knees in the air.

And, turns her back on the fairies.

“You can fly, am I right? Then, go away quickly. Or, do you want to see the moment when the “divine protection” of this ground disappear?”

The fairies somehow carried the leader who was suffering more pain than them and took her way while leaking out a faint light.

“From the beginning, if she did what she had been told to, it wouldn’t have lead to this painful selection. Still, with this, my grudge against her for driving me out of here has been cleared up.”

Though it was not directed to anyone, Lily muttered something, then, she was wrapped in a fairy barrier as it became a dazzling globe of light.

Following this, she began to slowly sink into the fountain.

She sunk inside the fountain to take the Queen Beryl enshrined inside it.

Chapter 64 - The Fountain of Light (2)

After some time, silence returned to the forest.

“They have stopped attacking.”

“.....So it seems.”

To the words spoken by the magician beside him, Corvus replied.

The search party led by Corvus to the Fairy garden to find the fountain of light had, as expected, entered into a fight with fairies.

Till just now, both sides were attacking each other with magic and the sounds and flashes of explosions had been shaking the forest.

But, for some reason, the fairies suddenly retreated back inside the forest.

The fairies had run while showing their backs, but their flying speed was not something humans could keep up with especially in this forest where the footing was bad.

“Could it be a trap?”

“It’s difficult to think that fairies can set up a trap. It might be simply a way rebuild their attack force by pulling back for now.”

Corvus himself had no experience of fighting against fairies, but he had some knowledge.

Comparing the knowledge in his head with the current situation, he guessed their actions and behaviours.

“As we go deeper inside, the thick magical energy would make them stronger, so they might be waiting to ambush us deep inside. It’s hard to think that they’ll use a trap or surprise attack though. We’ll advance in as planned, but don’t drop your guard and keep a check on the surroundings.”

“Roger!”

The soldiers spread out give their assent to Corvus’s order.

The many magicians and the few soldiers here were the elites chosen from the subjugation army led by Kievan.

Even in this forest with bad footing, under Corvus's instructions and orders, they maintained a perfect file without any disorder and kept moving forward. Their abilities were also shown when they came out of the battle with the fairies with only slight injuries.

Of course, the rain of magic attacks by fairies will only get stronger and harsher from here onwards, and even they will not be able to finish this without a few casualties.

But, there was not a single one who showed fear on his face. They simply moved towards the centre in silence while keeping the surroundings in check as ordered.

And as they continued moving, deep inside the forest a huge flash was seen accompanied with a loud sound of an explosion, and suddenly the soldiers were filled with tension.

But in the end, the attack did not come from anywhere.

While in doubt, they finally passed the forest and reached the fountain of light.

“oo, this is the fountain of light!”

“Yes, no doubt about it.”

In front of the mystical scene in front of them, all of the soldiers gulped.

The fountain was round in shape, and was so clear that it was completely transparent.

And, wondrously, there were no trees around it. Instead, multi coloured flowers were blooming.

Certainly, it was the living place of the fairies only seen in fairy tales.

But rather than the scenery, considering that all the water there was holy water, for a believer of the church it was nothing less than gold itself.

A quantity that was invaluable for a single soldier or magician.

“.....This is strange.”

But rather than relief on finding it, Corvus was having an extremely uncomfortable feeling right now.

Strange, when he spoke so, the magician beside him also realized it.

“We are not being attacked.”

Could it be, that they were surrounding us without us even realizing? Or so they suspected but they could not sense any presence from the surroundings no matter what.

Just where did those fairies disappear to?

“What should we do?”

“Let’s see, check the surroundings——“

The moment Corvus said that, the centre of the fountain suddenly started shining red.

Due to the sudden change, they all entered battle positions, and put all their concentration towards it.

The red light seemed to be ascending towards the surface of the water.

A feeling of something with an immense magical energy was rising to the surface could be sensed by not only the magicians but even Corvus as well.

With ripples, and shining brilliantly, finally that ‘something’ appeared.

That moment, the Crusaders forgot everything and had been captivated by the person in front of them.

“””Beautiful.”””

Someone, no, everyone spoke so.

Yes, the person that appeared from the lake was beautiful.

A bishoujo with shining platinum blonde hair and emerald green eyes.

The 2 pair of wings on her back shone in 7 colours, and every time it flickered, a rich wave of magical energy was spread out.

Her faintly shining white body was covered with a cloth that was as black as the night itself. The contrast between the black and white further supported that existence and its beauty.

And on her chest was a red gem that was giving a off a deep crimson shine.

“It’s a goddess.”

There was no better word to describe her.

The goddess appearing from the lake was something that appeared quite a lot of times in the culture of Arc continent.

A lost traveller, a hero seeking a holy sword to defeat demons, a pair of brother and sister abandoned by their parents, inside the fairy tale, they would meet her.

And the goddess that appears in any fairy tale or story, the most common feature was her unparalleled beauty.

At this moment, it was only obvious that they would associate her to the goddess that appeared in their stories.

“You people are the Crusaders——-“

The girl spoke towards the dumbfounded soldiers.

It was a voice so transparent that it reached the depths of the heart but,

“Greed filled filthy humans, ufufu, you’ll make a good opponent for a trial run.”

Different from the stories, she will not be compassionate towards them,

“Die without leaving even a single piece.”

She simply cruelly sentenced them all to death.

“All members, take defensive measures!!!”

Corvus shouted while raising his sword.

Sensing the immense magical energy and bloodlust from her, he prepared for battle.

“fufu, too slow.”

As the girl elegantly dropped the hem of her one piece black dress, 2 white lights flickered.

DON!!

As Corvus thought that the flash had passed him, a splash blood spread behind him.

“Wha——-“

As he looked back, the two magicians that were about to use defensive magic on his orders had their heads cleanly disappear and their robes had been dyed in blood.

While he was surprised, the 3rd one, then 4th, one by one, the white light pierced the heads of the magicians and in an instant turned into headless corpses.

Before he realized, 1/3rd of the magicians had become corpses.

He had never seen someone who could use an attack magic as strong as this used without even a single reaction, chant or any other preparation.

Although young, Corvus could be said to have had a high amount of experience and skills, but this girl’s attack magic was completely outside of his knowledge and common sense regarding battles.

That common sense was that a magic required some sort of chant or preparation before using it and a magic that could instantly kill a human could be consecutively used only once or twice.

If magicians could all use one hit kill magics consecutively, there would be no use for soldiers or swordsmen.

“Weak. Humans really are of this low level.”

As the girl said so, defensive magic was finally activated, and the barrier deployed around Corvus and the others.

The white magicians deployed Holy mind protective wall – Lux Wall Defence and the other magicians casted Water stream protective wall –

Aqua Wall Defence and Stone protective wall – Terra Wall Defence. A 3 level Tri Shield made by combining 3 defensive magics.

By using different elements, they covered the weakness of the elemental shields and also increased the strength and the defensive ability by 3 times.

On top of it, at the same time as the activation of the Tri Shield, the soldiers along with Corvus had been enchanted with Protect Boost. A magic that increased the physical defence of the person.

As long as the opponent could use insta kill level magic, defensive ability was the highest priority.

Quickly, or so it should have been, the defensive measures of Corvus and others had been used but in that little gap, the opponent had killed 1/3rd of the magicians.

While thinking about even retreating now, Corvus thought of his next move.

(“With this much defensive strength, we won’t get killed in a single attack at least, but the problem is whether we can attain attacking strength enough to kill that girl, no, that monster in the form of that girl.....to have lost so many magicians instantly has made it even difficult.”)

If she could use such high level attacks, then obviously she could also use high level defensive magics as well. And, to destroy a high level defensive magic, they need to use magic and not swords.

Thus, they were currently short on attack power due to losing the magicians so quickly.

“Oh, could it be that you are actually thinking of defeating me?”

But, Corvus had not yet realized that it was an extremely stupid thought.

Or maybe he simply didn’t want to realize and accept that fact.

“To not even understand the difference in strength, you are lower than even animals—“

The girl, as if reciting death itself, started to chant.

“يَهْلِكُ تَحْطُمُ نَجْمُ تَالَقِ“

She had used one hit kill magic without a chant, now, if she was also using a chant as well then just what level of destructive power must be hidden in the attack, they could not even comprehend.

“Obstruct and stop the chanting!!”

On Corvus’s shouting order to attack, and the magicians as well as bow users began firing.

“——fufu, like I said, too slow.”

The arrows, magic, before they could even reach, the girl had completed her chant decided to first take care of the attacks coming towards her rather than instantly attacking them.

Although, all she did was wait as the attacks were blocked simply by the fairy barrier – Oracle Shield that she had already deployed.

The girl only watched as the flames or the arrows of light extinguished in front of her.

As the attacks finally ended, the girl opened her mouth to end this battle that couldn’t really be called a battle in the first place.

“Bye Bye humans, die while regretting the fact that you obstructed ‘us’.”

The girl raised her right arm and above the soldiers, a magic circle drawn with light appeared.

A complex design with a circle as the base, that the magicians below had never seen, appeared in the sky.

They did not know that it was a magic with strength similar to that of a dragon breath that had made even Sariel use her strongest defensive magic.

“——Meteor Strike.”

The girl’s right hand swung downwards.

From the magic circle, a 7 coloured giant mass was released and fell on the squirming humans below to crush them.

The reinforced defensive magic, that will never break——

Yes, everyone thought that, but at this moment there was no one who tried to insist on it again.

“aa, oh God.....”

They could only pray, for the lives that would never be saved, towards God.

And their greed, wishes, shouts, and pain were all swallowed by the 7 coloured light—

DODON!!!

Annihilated, without leaving even a single trace.

“un, nice shot ♪!”

With wide smile, the girl felt neither guilt nor regret in killing the men there.

It was truly a fairy like, charming smile.

“Now then, I’m worried about Kurono as well. Let’s go and help him. It seems it was too late for Irz village but whatever, it can’t be helped.”

And thus, after leaving a crater of diameter 50m, the girl left the fountain of light to meet her beloved man.

Chapter 65 – Devil

Kurono first killed the 3 crusaders acting away from the village.

He lopped off the heads of the two soldier from the rear with the “Tsujigiri” in his hand and they instantly die.

Just when the third soldier catches the figure of Kurono in complete black attire, he was bisected from the crown of head to the solar plexus in one go. Kurono takes the oil, the soldiers were going to use to burn the house down and poured it onto the corpses of the goblin family and burned them along with the house.

He couldn't come up with any other better way for their funeral.

Naturally, he didn't dispose of the corpses of the three soldiers and rushed towards the centre of the village, in a straight line without hiding himself.

From then to the time he reached the gate, Kurono thoroughly killed every soldier that came assaulting him.

He chopped off the head of the people who attacked him with the hatchet and blew off the heads of those who try to escape.

The chainmail worn by soldiers is of no use to either of the attacks, they are all annihilated even before they could understand what happened to them.

And by the time Kurono reached the gates, the main force stationed in the centre of the village finally noticed that they were being attacked by someone.

At the same time a messenger ran to Kievan, and even before he could give orders, the commanding officer immediately starts moving to intercept the assailant.

However, without even a magician's support and them only being some infantrymen taking Kurono as an opponent was their last mistake.

After all, the Original Magic used by Kurono, especially the “Magic Bullet” can instantly kill normal a infantryman and it can also be fired rapidly with tremendous speed.

It is exactly just like a machinegun strafing.

The moment the soldiers rush in front of Kurono holding spears in their hands, the true value of “Magic Bullet” is revealed.

“Bullet Art – Full Burst” [ET: Atleast he is too OP for normal people.]

The thousand bullets fired by Kurono rush at once towards the Crusaders. By the time they realised the difference in power and the bad affinity against the magician in black clothes, there were already many corpses scattered on the road.

“wha, wha. What the hell is that guy!?”

The commanding officer upon looking a black clothed magician suddenly appearing at the gates of village and killing all of the the soldier under his command, he unintentionally speaks out a complaint in a withering voice.

“God Damn it, we didn’t hear anything about a monster like that living here——hiii!”

The mysterious black attack magic that killed his men, passes through him with a distance of paper breadth.

“Co, Commander! Please give the instructions!”

Hearing the voice of his men waiting for order which seemed like screams, a little bit of calmness returns to the commander.

True enough, seeing the scene of an entire group of infantrymen holding spears massacred before they could even reach the only enemy, the commanding officer and every other person present at the place was struck with fear and shock.

“B, Bows! Use the bows!”

The commanding officer who now feared attacking once again with spears, inevitably takes the measures for attacking the opponent without approaching him.

The opponent is still standing in the middle of the of the road, without any shield as if asking for them to shoot him to death.

Furthermore, they still have several tens of soldiers left, the difference in numbers is great.

“Thats right, calm down, that bastard is, no matter how you look at it, a magician, without a vanguard he can’t concentrate on his magic.” [ET: Duh, he just used the damn bullets with just the keywords no damn long chants. Otaku world logic]

The magician attacks while being on the rear, that is the same with adventurers and soldiers too.

According to this theory, if a magician appears out of nowhere without even a tank (aggro based classes of MMORPG) he would be able to attack first but when we start attacking, he won't be able to counterattack.

Even if he blocks the attack with defense magic, he can only buy a little more time.

"Alright, Firee!"

On the order, the arrows fly at full speed towards the black clothed magician.

Just before the arrows reach the enemy, a jet black rectangle like object, that seemed like the night sky had been frozen inside of it, appeared and it intercepted the first barrage of arrows.

But that action is just as they expected, if it's a magician he would definitely use the defense magic Guard. [ET: umm where did this guard go when he was fighting sariel][SK: Kurono's shield doesn't do shit against Sariel's attacks so he decided not to waste magical energy on shields.]

The arrows are all reflected back due to the hardness of the jet black square.

"Don't Falter! Keep on firing!"

Without being shaken, the soldiers fire the arrows rapidly.

They soon realized that the jet black square is very hard as even after getting struck from all the arrows, it is not getting even a scratch.

But it is a common knowledge for soldiers that the defense magic doesn't last for eternity, on the contrary it only lasts for a very little time.

The moment the magic effect appears, the magical power also starts gradually dispersing in the surrounding air.

Unless the magic with preservation effects like "Eternity" is casted, the phenomenon created by the magic won't last for a long time.

Therefore, no matter how much hard a defense magic is, at the most it will start disintegrating in several minutes.

Without waiting for it, the arrows continuously barraging his defense will pierce through it when the magical power decreases and hardness declines.

(That's right, what is there to be afraid, the things a single magician can do are limited. Die! while regretting that you came attacking us even as a joke!)[ET: does he know that line is a definite death-flag for person who says it. source: Wisdom!]

With his victory convinced in front of the frightening enemy, the commander's face expresses a distorted smile due to arousal and nervousness.

"Alright, alright, it's going good, just like this—"

The moment he was going to say the black clothed magician moved.

"A. a frontal assault!?"

That's right the enemy started a frontal assault while deploying the Shield. Furthermore, his speed is not that of a normal person.

It has surpassed the level of speed of a normal person just like the support magic 'Speed Burst' or enhancement martial art 'Air Walker'.

"A magician doing a frontal assault without any aid, it's so foolish—"

Seeing an unforeseen opponent in front of him the commander cannot make plans to deal with the enemy closing up the distance with tremendous speed.

As a result, the soldier keep on firing the arrows at him.

But with the hardness still effective on the shield, not even one arrow passes through it.

"oOAAAAAAa!!"

With not more than 10 metres remaining between them, the magician roars in a loud voice which even vibrates the eardrums like an electric shock.

When faced by the roar, strength and the bloodlust gushing out, the soldiers falter for a moment.

Immediately the opponent retracts back his shield and swings his baton in his left hand.

DoDoNn!

Something flashing black accompanied with loud consecutive sounds came flying.

That is the bullet made from the black magic, it is futile to count the numerous bullets.

““Gyaaaaa””

The front row soldiers shooting arrows, in front of the storm of bullets, are pierced with holes in their body at the point of impact as if the chainmail and surcoats were just for show.

“D, Draw out your swords!”

It was pitiable voice trembling with fear, in the current situation enemy had come close in that the bows are now meaningless. It was a precise order.

The soldiers throw away the bow, and pull out the broadswords hanging on their waists.

The enemy was already in the position that the swords will reach him.

Killing their fear, the soldiers rush out to assault with a do or die determination with their strife instinct at full throttle.

But the singing swords never reach anyone.

“He flew!?”

The enemy that should have been running on the ground, jumps just before coming in their range.

Along with the strong pressure that even earth’s surface is dented, he turned over the black robe and flies above the soldiers.

“A,AAa—-”

The commander realises, that the enemy fluttering in the air, intends to land on the place where he is standing.

“الـجـلـيـد مـنـع الـدـرـع-Ice Shield!”

The ice defense magic he has deployed is the fastest and smoothest ever in his whole lifetime,

DoDoNn!

Saved him from the once again fired black bullets.

“”GuHaaAA!””

However, the surrounding soldier all fall down to their knees, due to the rain of bullets falling down on them.

Half died instantly, the rest half are seriously injured, they are in no position to swing a sword and challenge him.

At the current moment, there was not even 1 soldiers within 3 m radius of the commander.

“HaaAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!”

When he passes through the disintegrating ice shield, the demon in the form of man enters his vision.

He raises a sinister looking hatchet, from his whole body a red aura gushes out.

The red eyes of the man pierces through him, it is impossible for him to be sane at the moment.

“A,A,Ua”

The black hatchet swing downwards from the sky, clearly cuts the ice shield into two.

The thick and heavy ice shield falls onto the the ground, and shatters.

Seeing the scene, the already fear struck commanding officer loses the power in his waist and falls down on ground facing upwards.

And, in front of him the magician who cut through his ice shield in single strike was standing.

“H.....e.....y you, don’t kill me.... we are the same human beings, right!?”

“Die” [ET: Love you Kurono saying the perfect line at the perfect opportunity.]

The man swings the hatchet and chops off the right arm of the commander easily.

Along with the blood spurting out, a scream made up of agony and fear echoes.

“Die”

He chops of the left arm too with the returning sword.

On top of chainmail, he had put equipments, but the attacking power of the blade far surpasses its defense power and both are are disconnected.

“Diee!”

In one swoop sideways, the hatchet severs the legs from below the knees.

The commanding officer who got his limbs cut off cruelly; his eyes turned white due to shock, and the foam of blood flows out from his mouth. The man looks towards the already dying commander and swings one more strike.

“DIEEeeEEEEEE!!”

The hatchet slashes downwards from the crown of head and cuts the steel armor easily, the skull is split in two halves, trampling down the brain, passes through the throat, and keeps on cutting in one strike to the chest area.

The one strike swung with all of his power, certainly and ghastly takes the life of one person.

"It, It's a Devil....."

Someone among the soldier muttered so,

The figure of the man surrounded by many soldiers, was that of a 'devil' who in a gruesome way killed their commander. There was not even one left who could laugh at this remark.

"E, Escape!"

"A devil's here! Run away!"

While whining the complaints, the soldiers all run at full speed striving to be the first to escape.

In the current situation, the commander of soldier is dead, the aide who is meant to be the next commander after him is also running while showing his back, there is no one to check on the soldiers in the current place.

".....Wait right there."

Nay, there is one person who wanted to stop them.

"Wait, don't try to escape, you bastards."

The black magician overcome with anger and holding a hatchet in his hand.

"If I don't kill each and everyone of you, it won't called a proper revenge, right?"

The blood colored eyes glare at the running soldiers just like a person who has gone mad.

For not letting even a single person leave from here alive, the demon, Kurono once again started walking towards the blood-scented Irz Village's centre.

Chapter 66 - Devil Vs. Priest (1)

As the pale faced messenger finally entered the Guild, Kievan quickly picked his favourite long staff and left the room.

Listening to the report of a black dressed magician that had infiltrated the village, rather than reprimanding the security to have allowed such a thing, he decided to head there himself and take action. It could be said that Kievan was a cool headed commander that could assess the situation well.

“To have come here alone, either he is very confident of his abilities or maybe he is just mad.”

Accompanied by his two disciples on his side, he opened the gate of the guild.

In front of the guild was the central area of the village. A place that had been lively with villagers till yesterday was no just an execution area for the crucifixion of pitiful adventurers.

Currently, the Crusader soldiers had gathered here to form a line of defence.

Behind the line of the soldiers with spears, those who had injured their limbs or just had them completely blown away were receiving treatment and the place was filled with the smell of fresh blood.

“Has he approached this close already?”

Kievan asked the messenger who was kneeling in front of him.

That voice was filled with anger on letting a single man approach this close.

“Yes, the enemy magician was using an unknown magic that was extremely powerful, so without the assistance of our own magicians——”

“Tch, just when our magicians had gone out.”(Kievan)

He unknowingly cursed but decided not to continue and instead think of how to deal with the current situation.

“You said it was a never before seen magic, right? What kind of magic was it?”(Kievan)

“I couldn’t see it clearly but, black, small balls flew around and pierced through even armour and flesh alike.”

It sounded like the low-level dark element magic [Black ball – Death Sagita] but its effect and power were not matching.

In the first place, [death sagita] was not a magic that could pierce through even chain mail. It was a more shock inducing strike type magic.

“It’ll be fine if it was just a simple Boost, but if it’ll be troublesome if it is an Original or Extra magic. Oi, deploy Dual Shield on the whole force.”

Receiving the order, the 2 disciple magicians started their chants.

“”لمنع الحماية نطقت وسديع ذاصدعة ب يضاء الجدران””

The magic invoked was the intermediate level wide range defensive magic [Lux Wall Defense]. The whole file of soldiers was covered with a barrier of light.

With this, they can defend against that long range magic but for the soldiers to attack, they’ll have to leave the barrier.

If the enemy can rapid fire sure-kill magic, then making the soldiers charge him would only increase the victims. Thus,

“The soldiers concentrate only on providing covering fire. We’ll face the enemy magician by ourselves.”(Kievan)

Kievan concluded that if it was not a magician that could deploy defensive barriers individually, he will not be able to face the enemy magician.

Normally, if all the magicians were here, they could put barriers on all the soldiers individually while providing support from the back at the same time, but since they weren’t here, it couldn’t be helped.

If, Kievan was just a Priest and not a white magician as well, there would have been no other means for the army to fight back but he was confident in his ability and skill as a magician.

That is why, even when facing the village’s Vigilante corps, and this time as well, he felt neither hesitation nor fear to stand on the front lines.

In fact he believed that it was trial of God to test his faith and so his fighting spirit rose even further.

“A,Ah, he’s here!!!”

Someone screamed from among the soldiers.

In the middle of the main street, a single figure was walking calmly as if he was walking in an uninhabited wasteland.

“It’s the devil!”

“The devil has come.....”

The soldiers became noisy.

After all they just saw more than 100 of their fellow soldiers killed in front of them, it would be weird to not be scared.

“Silence.”

Kievan had not directly seen the tragedy that had occurred down the street so he could only think of the soldiers as ‘cowards’.

“You bastards can just fire arrows from behind the barrier. The one who’ll directly face that is me.”(kievan)

The soldiers quieted from the Priest’s strong words and silently nocked their arrows on the bows.

“And I will definitely kill that evil magician.”

Kievan glared at the enemy who was still far away.

At that moment, as if he had noticed the glare, he raised his face.

Their eyes met.

Even from this distance, Kievan could see his gleaming red eyes.

“Berserk state?.....”(kievan)

As he murmured that, cold sweat appeared on his face.

(“To think I would really have to face a ‘Mad’ guy...”)

Berserk was one of the 'bad statuses' of magic.

In the first place, bad statuses were – 'Poison' that slowly scrapped away the stamina and vitality, 'Paralyze' that took away the freedom of the body and 'Siesta' that took away consciousness. They did not damage directly as attack but were abnormalities that slowly affected the body itself.

Berserk is also one of them. Its effect was to turn a person into a brutal killer that did not distinguish between allies and enemies.

On top of that, rise in physical abilities, isolation of pain, and such fearsome effects were also provided.

If a person fell into a berserk state, it attacks even allies along with the increase in strength, so it was highly difficult to stop it.

But, in such a situation where he was alone, the demerit of attacking his own allies was not present, and only the enhanced body strength is received.

Kievan had once faced a person who had fallen into the Berserk state.

He was just a soldier but showed immense toughness and had no choice but to kill him to stop him.

("This is a troublesome opponent, but—")

Kievan walked in front of the soldiers with the bright white long staff in his hand.

"Evil magician who stands against God! You will also die like these demons by crucifixion by my hands!!"

He showed the highest level of fighting spirit with his shout.

("In the end, Berserk only enhances the physical strength of the person. I won't lose to an animal that has lost even the ability to talk and understand words!!")

Knowing the weakness of the Berserk state, Kievan became confident of his victory.

But,

“I see, so you were the one who did it.....”

Kurono’s muttering in a small voice did not reach Kievan’s ears.



Chapter 67 - Devil Vs Priest (2)

“Evil magician who stands against God! You will also die like these demons by crucifixion by my hands!!”

Behind the commander of the Crusaders here, several crosses were lined up. Pierced by countless arrows, without limbs, bloody tortured corpses had been crucified on them.

The corpse had been brutally damaged, but, I don't move my gaze away, no I can't move it away.

That's because I knew the identity of the corpses very well.

Nino, Harry, Aten.....if Claydor is not here means his body didn't even exist anymore probably.

Other than them, many other people I had always seen in the guild, and even the civilian Nyarko was there, her corpse to be exact——-

“I see, so you were the one who did it.....”

My hand holding the hatchet shivered.

From my hand, magical energy flowed, and in return, bloodlust and hatred flowed back inside me.

“You...aaa..aaaaaaaagghaaaaaaa!!!!”

I howl. Only a shout without any meaning leaks from my throat.

I cry. Endless tears flowed from my eyes.

“aaaaaaaaa——”

I won't forgive, I won't forgive, I will never forgive this.

How dare they do something so cruel.

They were my precious friends.

They were all good guys. A suspicious guy like me, they, the whole village accepted me.

Do you know? How precious were they to me? To protect them I would fight with my life, that's right, I even fought against Sarel for them.

Even then, despite all that.....if, if everyone died then, I, I won't be able to fight to protect them anymore.

I, I will——

“aa.....aaaaaa.....”

In front of the over atrocious deaths of my friends, the hatchet's thoughts increased even more from my emotions unstable from sadness.

If you are sad, if it hurts, if it's painful, if you hate then——Kill.

“aa.....”

Kill, kill your enemies, without mercy, hesitation or compassion, just cruelly, and gruesomely, keep on killing them all.

“aa that's right——”

Look carefully, my enemies are in front of me.

Then, what I have to do is decided. Definitely, surely, I have decided.

“——-I'll avenge all of you.”

.

.

.

.

(the POV changes here)

“——-aaaaaaaaaaaaa!!!!”

A howl, of an incredible volume, was released by the black magician.

That shivering sound that resounded from inside the stomach, even while inside the barrier, the soldiers were overcome with fear.

But, even in front of that raging enemy, Kievan did not flinch.

That's because the enemy is in a berserk state. It was easily possible to raise a voice that could crush the throat. That reaction was still inside his expectations. There was no need to be surprised.

"Let's go. Match with me."

On Kievan's words, the 2 disciples started their chants and it didn't take much time to activate it.

"Concentration enhancement – Conses Boost."

"Element Boost."

This was their favourite tactic that they had used even when annihilating the Vigilante Corps.

("If it's a wide range magic, then even if he's in berserk state, he won't be able to get out of the attack range with one leap.")

Rather than trying to kill in a single strike, Kievan put more importance on hitting the enemy accurately first.

A person in Berserk state, even if his limb is torn off, or his stomach explodes, as long as it is not a fatal damage, he will not stop moving.

But, even if he didn't die, if he lost his legs, then he wouldn't be able to move either. If he loses his arm, then he won't be able to swing his weapon. Basically it was fine as long as he could make him powerless.

Kievan who had received double enhancements was about to use his [Lux Force Blast], the same magic that had killed the whole Vigilante Corps in a single blow.

On top of it, although Berserk state increased physical strength, it did not increase the defensive abilities. As long as he is unable to evade, he would have no way to defend himself against Kievan's attack.

("Hm, a sane magician might have been able to put up a barrier but he won't be able to make rational decisions with that mad head of his.")

Kievan became confident of his victory, thus, he did not feel like letting him die with just the rain of arrows of the soldiers.

Kievan started a chant only a few seconds long—but before that, the enemy black magician, Kurono moved first.

“—!!”

The voice had not reached his ears, but suddenly, black smoke spread all over the place.

“A smoke screen is useless!!”

Kievan who had completed his chant, just as he said, he believed that it was useless no matter how the enemy struggles.

But, Kievan held a doubt considering the fact that a person in Berserk state took an action except attacking.

That means, the enemy had not yet lost his ability to think yet.

“Lux Force Blast!!”

But, even if he had thought that, there was no reason to cancel his attack now.

Kievan fired his strongest attack in front of him aiming for the invisible enemy hidden inside the thick black smoke.

An extremely hot light spread over the area as if lighting inside the darkness.

In front of that dazzling light, the soldiers turned their faces away and even Kievan himself shut his eyes for a moment.

(“It’s over.”)

As he spoke that inside his mind, an unbelievable sight was in front of him when he opened his eyes.

“haaaaaaaaaaa!!”

Beneath the black clothes, not just his eyes but his whole body was releasing the red aura of Berserk. The mad magician clad in that aura was standing there.

(“What? Uninjured? That’s impossible——”)

In this different world where science has not advanced, the properties of [light] were not yet known.

In the first place, the effects of light were diminished just by being in the atmosphere. Only in a true void where there are no 'obstacles' can the light show its max effectiveness.

Thus, inside water, mist, steam etc. are able to reduce the effects of light even more than normal atmosphere.

Kurono, by releasing 'black smoke' that possessed particles of 'darkness' that could absorb light, he halved the power of Lux Force Blast, that was basically a laser beam.

And, even if it was an advanced magic, at half of its strength it will not be able to pierce through Kurono's shield.

This was how Kurono remained unharmed. However, Kievan had no way of knowing all this.

But Kievan was an experienced magician who won't be shaken from just this.

Bracing himself, he quickly entered a defensive stance.

"—Lux Argalea Shield!"

Kievan realized that the lumps of black magical energy materializing around Kurono were the ones that pierced through even chain mail.

The distance between them was just a few meters. He was clearly inside his attacking range. And Kievan who just attacked could not attack again so quickly either. So he had no choice but to defend against the enemy's attack.

""Lux Armour Shield""

The 2 disciples beside him also came to the same conclusion.

"haaaa!!!"

Kurono jumped towards Kievan and at the same time fired his magic bullets.

Its aim was, the 2 magicians supporting Kievan.

BAGIN!!

The black full metal jacket bullet struck the barrier of light but did not pierce through.

The moment the 2 thought that they had successfully defended, their heads burst open.

The hands that were raised to the front to use the barrier went limp and fell down face up.

They had no idea how the bullets, they had supposedly defended against, pierce through.

No, maybe they didn't even realize that had already died.

As to why the two had died, only Kuroono and Kievan knew.

("He hit the exact same point again.....how can his aim be so accurate even under Berserk state?.....")

Kievan clearly saw Kuroono fire another bullet on the exact same point where the first bullet had hit to break through the barrier.

If it was just once then he might have considered it a coincidence, but to have it two at the same time in the same way, he had no choice but to believe that this black magician possessed immaculate aim that he retained even under Berserk state.

Kievan had started losing his composure from this chain of unbelievable events.

But he couldn't just retreat now.

"Dieeeeeeeeeee!!!"

In front of the enemy that was shouting curses and swinging a giant hatchet, he couldn't retreat even if he wanted to.

("That's right. I can't fall back here. Against this, this evil magician that is a devil incarnate, I, a priest of God must not lose, I cannot lose!!")

In front of the approaching evil blade, Kievan put all his magical energy in the barrier and fervently prayed.

“Oh God, grant me the strength to destroy this evil!!”

The black cursed blade, finally swung down on the holy shining white shield.

.

.

.

“Dieeeeeeeeeee!!!”

Holding the cursed hatchet with my both hands, I swing it with full strength.

“Of God——”

The priest was screaming something.

GAGIIIIINNNN!!!

But his voice was drowned by the loud noise of the blade striking the shield.

(“Shit, it’s hard!!”)

The black blade only pierced inside the shield of light slightly and doesn’t seem to move any further.

This priest, although nowhere near Sariel’s level, but he is still a strong white magic user. I guess he wasn’t the commander just for show.

But, no matter how strong he is, I must kill him here no matter what.

“That’s why, more, give me more powweeeeeeeeerrrrrrrrrr!!!”

And so, the cursed hatchet [Tsuigiri] responded to my wish.

[ooooooooo]

The black blade clearly raised a ‘voice’.

At the same time, from my hands, an incomparable amount of magical energy was sucked.

I started to lose the sensation of my fingers but rather getting weaker, the strength behind the swing of the hatchet got stronger.

Whether it was blood or magical energy, I don't know, but inside my vision that was filled with red mist, I clearly saw the shape of the black blade changing.

("I see, this is—")

After sucking the blood of the numerous Crusaders and eating my black magical energy and hatred, the cursed hatchet [Tsujigiri] was,

("Evolving!")

It evolved into Grudge Hatchet – [Hararetsu/Harakiri].(T/N: not sure how to translate 腹裂 lit. means stomach cutter/ripper)

"haaaaaaaaaaaaaa!!!"

Having changed into an even more sinister form, the black blade began cutting the barrier.

"Impossible!? This is—"

The priest looked with fright as the power of the blade increased with the change in shape.

The hatchet's evolution not only increased the sharpness of the blade but also increased the amount of physical enhancement provided.

And that's not all. Uptil now, using the hatchet became easier naturally just by holding it, but now it even allowed the activation of a [Martial art] skill.

"Kuronagiiiiiiiiiii!!" (T/N: lit. Black calm)

Leaving a black trace, it was a single horizontal flash.

The martial art [Kuronagi] that struck with immense slashing power, easily cut through the Priest's body along with his shield in two.

Ripping his stomach open, the Priest's upper half flew in the air.

Without even trying to dodge, as I bathed in the shower of blood, I heard the voice of the priest that had been put to death.

“Oh God.....Why have you.....forsaken me.....”



Chapter 68 - Release Curse

The Crusaders froze on the spot.

“aaa.....Priest-sama was.....”

Someone muttered. The soldiers, even in confusion, clearly understood what happened in front of them.

Everyone had seen Kievan use the advance level light magic the moment the black smoke spread all over.

The soldiers had also believed that attack to have ended it along with the caster himself.

But, before they could even raise the cheer for victory, that devil jumped out of that smoke while releasing a howl that sent shivers down the spine.

The battle was truly concluded in the next few seconds.

The devil used the black bullets that had killed countless of their comrades and shot the heads of the 2 magicians.

By the time those two magicians fell to the ground, the devil had already swung is sinister looking black blade towards the Priest.

The devil's roar, the Priest's prayer and the sound of the blade cutting the barrier of light away, all came at the same time.

And the next moment, the Priest's body was ripped into 2 pieces and the blood stained upper body flew in the air.

“The Priest-sama died.....”

“The devil killed him.....”

Unrest spread among the soldiers.

Kievan, even though young, was extremely skilled as a commander and not to mention that he was also a skilled white magician that did not fear fighting on the front lines himself. Thus he had gained much trust from his subordinate soldiers.

And a mind that idolized God and his confident personality, all combined with his skills gave a special kind of charisma.

And that trusted superior was easily killed in front of them.

Losing their fighting spirit, the soldiers would soon start panicking and running away.

“Calm down!!”

But, due to one squad commander’s shout, the soldiers stopped.

“Look, after fighting Priest-sama, the devil is exhausted!!”

Sure enough, the black figure currently had his one knee on the ground.

“We can kill him now! Avenge the Priest-sama!!”

Strength returned in the arms of the soldiers holding the weapons.

“The effect of the barrier is still there, we shall shoot that devil to death!!”

Even if the caster dies, the effect of magic doesn’t disappear instantly.

Currently, as long as the magical energy of the barrier deployed doesn’t exhaust, it’s effect won’t disappear.

“””Kill the devil!”””

As if trying to shake of their fear, the soldiers shouted in chorus.

“”Kill the devil! Kill the devil!!””

Nocking their arrows, the strings were pulled to the max.

“Ready your aim!”

The long bows and crossbows aimed towards the target.

The devil had not yet moved.

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.

.

“haa....haa.....”

After cutting apart the priest with [Kuronagi], I was struck with extreme tiredness.

This is due to over exhaustion of magical energy used during the evolution of the hatchet rather than the backlash of using the martial art.

I faced this condition numerous times during those manoeuvring experiments so I didn't faint instantly due to experience, but to become like this in the current situation is a bit troublesome.

No, facing a priest that could use advance level magic, there was chance that I would have even sustained injuries as well. It's thanks to the hatchet evolving that I was able to win easily.

But that doesn't change the fact that the condition is getting worse.

Those soldiers are still ready to fight even after seeing their superior killed.

They are shouting [Kill the devil]. Fucking bastards! The devils here are you bastards!

No matter how much I curse, it doesn't change the fact that countless arrows are going to be shot at me any moment.

“haa.....shit!”

Even though I said to Lily that we shouldn't be reckless, but look at me now.

My magical energy is completely empty. Well at least my body is still unscratched.

“Sorry Lily, it looks like I'll break my promise.....”

Although I promised that I won't be reckless after fighting Sarel, to have broken the promise this quickly, I really am a pathetic guy.

“But, these guys—”

The sensation returned to my fingers and I once again gripped the handle of the blade tightly.

“Just these guys, I can’t let any of them get away.”

I don’t know whether I would be able to kill all those soldiers without any magical energy.

No matter how sturdy this body is, if I lose too much blood, I will die. If my head was cut, of course I will die. But still, I won’t step back.

I’ll keep on killing.

Even if it’s just one more, I’ll drag these bastards to hell!!

“Uooooooooohhh!!!!”

From the evolved hatchet, the torrent of hatred and bloodlust started flowing inside me again.

Forcibly putting strength in this body that’s screaming for rest, I jump back to my feet.

A countless amount of arrows rush towards me.

I don’t have enough energy to deploy my shield again. I can only defend by swinging my hatchet.

Resolving myself to get hit many times, I swing the hatchet to at least deflect as many as I can. At that moment,

DODODOO!!!

In front of me, a bright red flame burst out.

What the hell is this? Enemy’s attack magic? Did something explode?

But in front of the spreading crimson flames, when I thought I would die,

“.....this is, defensive magic?”

I wasn’t taking any damage from this magic. On looking closely, the flame isn’t randomly rising from the ground, it’s shaped like a proper wall.

To create a wall of flame this big, it must be the advance level wide range defensive magic [Ignis Rampart Defence].

Anyway, whatever magic it may be, the wall of flame devoured all the arrows that were coming towards me and protected me.

But, just who was it that used such an advanced magic—— the only one I could think of was my only ally and partner Lily.

“That was close.”

The voice that came from behind me was a transparent voice of a woman, but I instantly knew that it was not Lily’s.

“Wh,Who is it.....?”

As I looked back, a black shadow was walking towards me with light steps.

No, that isn’t a shadow but clothes that are black from head to toe similar to me.

A three-cornered hat like those in fairy-tales, a jet black robe adorned with soft feathers, a weirdly shaped long staff, and light blue hair and golden shining eyes.

I had met only once, but the name of the person in that unforgettable unique dress is,

“Fiona Soleil!?”

“I wanted to meet you, Mr. Icecandy.”

“Ic, Ice.....?”

Due to her sudden appearance, I forgot the situation I was in after looking at her usual semi-closed expressionless eyes and her weird words.

“Ah, before I forget I’ll release your curse alright?”

“What?”

What the hell is she even saying? As I doubted, Fiona began moving her lips and small chant was heard.

“مشرقة ال شر ال ظلام طرد—[Release Curse – Dispel]”

“!?!”

The moment the words of release curse came to my ears, I suddenly dropped the hatchet that had felt like a part of my own hand till now.

The moment the hatchet fell on the ground, I fell to my knees like a puppet that had its strings cut.

With the enhancement provided by the hatchet, I was able to keep on standing even without having any magical energy left inside me. So it was the natural what would happen if I lost it.

I thought that I would fall to the hard ground but I was taken in and embraced by the soft arms of a person instead.

Hugged by the witch's chest, my vision was filled with the dark robe and I was unable to see her face. In the first place, I didn't even have the energy to even move my head.

"You sure like to use dangerous things. It was a light Berserk state."

".....thanks to it I was able to kill the Priest."

I can't move my body, but was somehow able to speak.

"Are you here to save me?"(kurono)

"Yes."(Fiona)

"Thanks, but this place is dangerous. Fiona-san should run away quickly. I won't resent you even if you leave me here."

"Then we'll lose our meaning to come here."

'We'? Who else is---

"Look, adventurers have come to save the village."

As Fiona-san lifted me, the place where the wall of fire was now,

"a,aa....."

A group of strong adventurers of different races were standing there.

"1 gold for 1 kill!!"

"hyaaa ha, I'll hunt all these bastards!!!"

The adventurers roared and attacked the remaining Crusaders.

Having lost their commander as well as all the magicians, the group of humans, no matter what the number, can never win against these adventurers.

They were pushed this far just by me alone. Having realized that it had become hopeless for them now that reinforcements had come, the soldiers began running away while showing their backs.

“.....Fiona-san.”

“What is it?”

“I leave the rest, to you.....”

With the scene of victory in sight, I finally felt relief and fell asleep.

.

.

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“I leave the rest, to you.....”

Having left those words, Kurono lost his consciousness in Fiona’s arms.

Fiona firmly held Kurono’s large and heavy body with her slender arms.

In the surroundings, the sounds of cries raised by the running Crusaders and the chasing adventurers resounded.

Within that carnage, the figure of Fiona gently holding Kurono looked like some famous painting.

But, there was one single person that did not approve of it.

“Get away from Kurono.”

Pretty yet somewhat cold voice of a girl reached Fiona’s ears.

When she raised her head, out of nowhere, a girl with rainbow coloured wings was standing there.

Lily who had left the fountain of light, had reached Irz village, or rather, to the place where Kurono was.

“.....who are you?”

“That’s enough. So hurry up and get away from him.”

Lily wasn’t directing clear bloodlust, but even the air-headed Fiona understood that her words contained a thorny nuance.

But, even if it was any another woman than Fiona, she would not have understood that it was due to a simple personal reason like – ‘I will not let any woman other than me embrace Kurono’.

“Here you go.”(Fiona)

In any case, Fiona quietly handed Kurono back to Lily who had landed in front of her.

Lily, just like the time when fighting Sariel, easily carried Kurono.

And finally now that Kurono was completely handed over to Lily did she show her usual fairy like smile to Fiona.

“You were quicker than expected, that really helped, Thank you.”(Lily)

“It’s our job after all.”(Fiona)

“That’s certainly true for the Vigilante corps and the adventurers of Kuar village, but is it the same for you who came from Arc continent as well?”

“.....so you knew?”

“You didn’t really try to hide it either right? After all, the guild card you showed to Kurono was not of this continent.”

“Ah, could it be, that you are the fairy that was with Kurono-san back then?”

“You realized that just now?”

“You really are pretty.”

Lily took a deep sigh. Now that she thought about it, she was out of sync even back then while talking with Kurono.

“That’s enough about me. More importantly, are you an enemy? Or an ally?”(Lily)

“Lily let out a slight killing intent, but Fiona normally replied with her usual expressionless face.

“I’m a rank 1 adventurer now.”(Fiona)

And just like that time, from beneath her hat, she took out a plate and gave it to Lily.

That was without a doubt a guild card of Pandora continent.

“Are you a traitor towards humans?”(lily)

“I just came to Pandora continent as a mercenary. But the food wasn’t good so I resigned.”

“.....I see.”

Lily felt stupid to have been alert and cautious against this half asleep witch.

Lily who could read minds knew that her reactions and responses weren’t an act.

At this moment too, Fiona is still thinking about Ice candy. Lily, due to her telepathic powers, understood that even if she didn’t want to.

“Well it’s fine. I’ll let you eat as much icecandy as you want as long as you don’t betray us.”

“Really? It’s a promise then.”

Seeing Fiona bend forward and stick her face closer, Lily regretted making a hasty decision for a second.

(“ But, turning this woman into an enemy will be troublesome. If she is going to stay as an adventurer the it’s better to leave it like that.”)(lily)

Lily had seen the wall of fire that saved Kurono.

And the true identity of that magic, neither Kurono nor the adventurers had realized, except Lily who had been watching from above.

It was not [Ignis Rampart] that Kurono thought. In the first place, it was neither a wide range magic nor an advance level magic.

It was just a simple lower level defensive magic [Ignis Shield].

("It's obvious that even the same magic will be different when used by different people, but, to display that much strength with just a low level magic, this wasn't just a matter of talent.")

Whether it was a talent of inhumane level, or was it a special technique or maybe she was born with some special constitution. But whatever it was, Lily realized that this witch called Fiona possessed a fearsome level of magic ability.

It's fortunate that Fiona didn't possess an evil mind like an actual 'witch' and instead was just a glutton.

"For such a weird witch to exist, this world really is a vast place."(lily)

As Lily breathed a sigh out of exhaustion, she moved towards the nearby guild to let Kurono rest easily.

Behind her, the black witch who was thinking of the sweet taste of Ice candy also followed.

Kuro No Maou

- Volume 6 -

Towards Spada

Chapter 69 - The 4 Apostles (1)

The Daedalus royal castle's throne room was the same as it was, elegantly made by Dwarf artisans, but just the black dragon emblem had been replaced by God's cross emblem.

In that throne room that emphasised on its new ruler, 4 people were sitting in armchairs.

"Welcome to Daedalus."

The one who spoke the words of welcome in a soft voice the Supreme Commander of the Crusaders as well as the one who single-handedly defeated the Dragon King Gaevinal and earned the title of [Dragon Slayer], the 7th Apostle Sariel.

"We came especially for the sake of seeing you so better be thankful, Sariel!"

The one calling Sariel by name in a girly high-pitched voice was the 11th Apostle Misa.

As usual, wearing a high exposure modified robe, Misa crossed her seductive bare legs and reclined on the chair arrogantly.

"It, It has been a long time, Lord Sariel....."

A boy so beautiful that if a believer saw him they would get a nosebleed looking at that cute, blushing face showing restlessness and nervousness. It was the 12th Apostle Mariabelle.

He had thought up various smart lines but when he came in front of Sariel, he could only use the safe words of greeting only.

"It's good to see that you are in good health Sariel-chan, but—"

And, with a gentle smile truly worthy of being called the [Holy woman], the 3rd Apostle Mikael stood up from her seat and walked towards Sariel.

Sariel who possessed an elegant and ephemeral presence and Mikael who had a voluptuous body and the charm of an adult; the scene of these 2 together having 2 extreme types of beauty looked somewhat similar to seeing a mother and her child.

“It seems your injuries have not yet healed.”

Mikael gently held Sariel’s right palm that was still in bandages.

“Oh my how terrible! Such a big hole has opened here.”

Mikael somehow guessed the extent and type of injury just by caressing Sariel’s palm.

The palm that was struck with Kurono’s poison needle, Sariel had pierced her own palm with her spear to remove the poisoned portions, that wound had not yet healed up.

“[Pain, Pain go away♪]”

At Mikael’s carefree words, not a single one here felt that she was joking around.

“.....Thank you very much.”

“No need. It’s my duty after all.”

As Mikael let go of her hand, the bandage automatically started coming off.

On Sariel’s hand, the painful wound that should have been there was now nowhere to be seen, as if there wasn’t a wound in the first place. Sariel’s clean white hand could be seen.

To have healed the wound, that would have normally taken some time even with treatment, instantly, was one part of the 3rd Apostle Mikael’s abilities.

With a satisfied smile, Mikael returned back to her seat.

“That wound earlier, how did you get it? Did a dragon appear again?”

Misa asked in a sharp voice.

“Yes, it seemed different from the wounds gotten from facing the Dragon king.”(mariabelle)

Those two were simply worried about Sariel, or rather, they were curious about this existence that could damage Sariel who was an apostle even after the Daedalus army had been annihilated.

“

Sariel answered with silence.

Anybody else could have just lied, but for the extremely awkward/tactless Sariel, lying was almost impossible. Thus silence.

“fuuun, so you won’t answer.”

Seeing Sariel stay quiet, Misa’s eyes flashed.

Sariel thought for a second, that maybe she realized that she(sariel) had let an enemy get away but,

“fufun, you, stupidly got into an accident and injured yourself, right?!”(misa)

“.....”

[Thank god she’s an idiot] anybody would have thought that on seeing Misa misunderstanding splendidly by herself.

“You must have carelessly touched the blade of the armament scripture and got that wound, right?”(misa)

“Isn’t that what you did a while back?”

While sighing, Mariabelle recalled that embarrassing event where Misa, ‘Can armament scriptures cut even Apostles?’ thought that and grabbed the blade that was not just at a level of being extremely sharp, and gotten her wrist severed!

“Oh shaddup! If I can mess up then Sariel can too, right?!?”(misa)

“Just who, other than yourself, would make such a mistake?”(mariabelle)

“I just know that’s how Sariel messed up as well!!”

Demonstrating her convenient skill of not listening to inconvenient things about her, Misa approached Sariel while ignoring Mariabelle.

Against that Misa, Sariel,

“.....nn.”

Slightly nodded and accepted.

She can't lie, but there's no need to correct the misunderstanding of the opposite side either.

If she agreed here, there would be no pursuit for Kurono, even Sarel could make such a judgement.

"See! It really was an accident!!" (Misa)

"Everyone makes mistakes of course." (Mariabelle)

Mariabelle made a perfect 180° turn in a few seconds. (T/N : Wow this guy.)

"Mariabelle, you....."

That's completely different from what you were saying till now, said Misa with her eyes.

But he showed no signs of wavering because,

"I am Lord Sarel's ally." (Mariabelle)

"fun, yes-man aren't really popular though."

"!?!"

Misa's one line, disrupted the boy's heart.

"Of course, even Sarel doesn't like guys with no individuality, right?" (Misa)

"I....." (Sarel)

"See!! Even Sarel doesn't like guys like you!!" (Misa)

I haven't said anything, or so she thought but Sarel had already lost the timing to interpose between the rapid fast talking.

"uu.....Lord Sarel, I.....I am....."

Heartbroken, Mariabelle's shoulder dropped down disappointed.

Misa looked down on him with a triumphant pose.

Sarel remained expressionless but was thinking hard to at least say something.

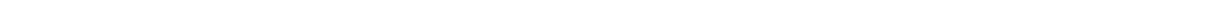
An idiotic composition that can never be shown to a devout believer of the cross religion, was taking place currently inside the throne room.

“ufufu, it was the right decision to come for a visit. Everyone seems so happy.”

Mikael, who was much older, looked at the three Apostles with a warm gaze.

But she was supposed to control this meeting and not let it go like this as the eldest Apostle here, anyone would think that, but there was no one here who could point that out to her.

And thus, the first meeting between the 4 Apostles on the Pandora Continent kept on going with a ‘pleasant’ atmosphere like this and not a single topic relating to politics or the religion was raised.



Chapter 70 - The 4 Apostles (2)

Late at night, 2 figures were standing on the balcony of the Daedalus royal castle.

“The conversation during the day sure heated up quickly. Lord Sariel’s expression also seemed brighter than usual.”

While gazing at the nightscape of Daedalus spreading below, Archbishop Liuchrome spoke these words.

Beside him stood his younger brother Mariabelle who had the same beautiful face that could be mistaken for a girl’s.

The two of them were real brothers of the Ignosis family.

“fufu, I’ll be happy if that really is true.”

Mariabelle closed his eyes thought of the face of his crush. Since he was alone with his brother right now, he had reverted to a normal tone instead of his usual stiff and formal speaking way.

“Though, I would have been happier if Lord Misa wasn’t here.”

“She must have been also worried about Lord Sariel after all. As expected of her self-proclaimed ‘eternal rival’, fufufu, how charming.”(Liuchrome)

Maybe because they are of the same age and gender, the one-sided rivalry Misa had towards Sariel was so famous that there was no one in Elysion that didn’t know about it.

Liuchrome who has had the chance to directly come in contact with the apostles actually had seen Misa shouting “Wait a second Sariel!!” and trying to pick a fight, so he knows that it isn’t just a rumour.

“Haah, it’s really sad that I had to become the kouhai (T/N:junior) of such a childish person. If I could have awakened as an Apostle a bit more earlier—
“(mariabelle)

Apostles are numbered according to the order in which they ‘awaken’ and that also decides their hierarchy as well.

Misa was older in age than Mariabelle so it was only natural to have awakened as an Apostle earlier as well.

But still, every time Misa said something, he only lamented the fact further.

“She will also become a great Apostle like the previous ones, surely. From my point of view, Lord Misa seems to possess sensitiveness and common sense befitting a girl of her age.”(Liuchrome)

“.....I really wonder about that.”(Mariabelle)

“That’s what it is.”

Liuchrome smiled meaningfully while Mariabelle still showed an expression of not accepting it.

The two brothers continued conversing underneath the starry night sky.

“——By the way, what did Cardinal Ars say?”

The moment Liuchrome asked that, Mariabelle’s expression tightened.

“Don’t cause any trouble with the subordinates of Mercedes.”(mariabelle)

“I see.”

Liuchrome’s gaze looked past the castle walls of Daedalus.

‘Subordinates of Mercedes’, i.e., the forces that came as reinforcements after the battle of Goldran, that were currently capturing the villages outside in the territory of Daedalus.

“The first land Virginia, Capital Daedalus, and the keystone for sea trade, Eidon. With these three important points already in our hands, I don’t really see the need to fight more just to increase our territory, though.”

It was the Crusaders that won at Goldran and captured Daedalus but on if one would see the internal circumstances, they would realize that the army was totally of the Cardinal Ars faction inside the Republic.

Starting from the fact that the vice commander was Ars’ right-hand man, the 15 thousand soldiers were all men that he himself had gathered. The only person not clearly attached to any faction was only the Apostle Sariel.

Originally, everyone had refrained from sending their own troops in a losing battle.

But, now that the Crusaders had won, the 'owner' of the army, that is Cardinal Ars would also have the whole land under his control naturally.

Thus, all three important points mentioned before would also come under Ars' control as well.

But after the battle of Goldran, the new reinforcements that came were publicly a part of the same Crusaders but it was a fact that they were all a part of various factions of the church and nobles.

Among those was the especially influential faction belonging to the man name Mercedes, one of the 3 Cardinals.

"It'll be troublesome, if some part of the territory is not given to them."(liuchrome)

Starting with Mercedes, if they tried to suppress all others trying gain benefits from Pandora and keep everything under Ars' control, then a revolt will break out sooner or later.

Currently, the Pandora continent was extremely attractive for them. That is why there a high chance of an inquisition being conducted through assassinations and false accusations, and break up the Crusaders internally.

But conversely, if they were given some 'share' as Liuchrome suggested, then there would be no revolt, at least publicly.

If the Ars' side declared that the rights to the territories in Daedalus as 'first come first serve', then the reinforcements will start competing among themselves.

As long as they didn't interfere, it didn't matter how much the others go around destroying things. The Ars faction has already acquired enough land for themselves and is already in a winning position.

"But that's only till the right to control over the Daedalus territory is officially decided."(mariabelle)

"Yes, we simply controlled one part of the eastern area of the continent only."(liuchrome)

The Pandora continent is extremely vast. Even if they are controlling the important areas of Daedalus currently, if they cannot get right to control over other areas, the current advantage will become zero or maybe even become a minus for them.

“But, it’ll be some time before we cross the Gallahad mountain range and invade the city-state located in the central region.”(Liu)

“That’s why, ‘brother and others’ should increase their military strength as much as possible while you have the time.”(MB)

“Well we did lose quite a lot of soldiers at Goldran after all. It’ll take some time before we can once again gather a trusted army.”

“Conversely speaking, even if those nobles get impertinent and start attacking the central region,”

“There’s no choice but to overlook them. But even if that happens, there’s only a 1 in a thousand chance that they’ll be able to cross the mountain.”

There were many reasons behind why Liuchrome was able to say that with a daring smile.

Firstly, the ultimate strength of their army, Apostle Sariel, basically will not be taking part in any further battles from now onwards.

The Apostle that can take sure victory cannot be stopped if they desire more territory. And to take a territory for their own self, there was a need to capture it by themselves to claim right to control, but there is a restriction on them that they can only take part in battle when an enemy of an equal power level appears.

Thus, no faction can claim for the aid of Sariel until a situation where [they cannot win by themselves or they will take huge losses] appears.

Even if she is the supreme commander, if she ignored the ideas of other and moved by her own, then the rule of dividing the profits will collapse and could lead to the breakup of the Crusaders.

Thus, now that the first and the biggest threat towards the conquering of Pandora, that is the conquest of Daedalus has been done, there were many who stated that there is no need for Sariel to move any more. Also, the Apostles themselves have also nominated Sariel to ‘watch over’ the conquest of the continent.

And Sariel herself, understood the duty required from her, and will not interfere uselessly in the Crusaders.

“In the first place, the strength of the private armies of the nobles and churches is limited. If there affiliation is different, then they won’t cooperate with each other either.”(MB)

“Exactly. But the main reason why they cannot cross the mountain is [Spada].”(Liu)

“Spada?”(MB)

“It’s the name of the city-state adjacent to the territory of Daedalus. That Spada is currently protecting the border along the Gallahad mountain ranges.”

“So, are they strong?”

“All the demon armies are strong in the first place. But Spada that is known as the ‘Gladiator city’, has soldiers that are considered elite even among the demons.”

“‘Gladiator ‘ is it? The demons really have savage customs still prevailing here.”

“But, thanks to that custom, the most elite of the warriors have been gathered in Spada. There is also a plan to add mercenaries to the defence forces of Spada it seems. On top of that, the Gallahad mountain ranges provide a natural protection to Spada as a fort. It’s truly a terrain fit to fight a defensive battle. To invade properly, we might need a force even bigger than the one used at Goldran.” (Liu)

It has been a little over one month after the capture of Daedalus. Liuchrome has already started gathering info about the next target of the Crusaders, which is the city state located in the central region, Spada and also other neighbouring central region city-states.

And the info that Liuchrome had gathered, he had no intention of sharing with the rest of the Crusaders.

“I see. But those people will still try and invade Spada, I think.”(MB)

“fufufu, till the time they come back crying to Her Excellency Sariel after becoming unable to cross the mountains, we’ll leisurely spend time right here in Daedalus.”

Expecting ‘them’ to face a harsh defeat against the ‘inferior demons’, Liuchrome did not tell others the true strength of Spada. It was on the level of full info concealment actually.

Even if they belong to the same Crusaders, as long as the factions are competing against each other, even Ars wanted the other armies to get hurt.

“As usual, Nii-san is malicious.....”(MB)

Looking at the amused face of his older brother, Mariabelle said so.

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While the Ignosis brothers were spending their time together, the 11th Apostle Misa was lazily sprawled on her magnificently giant bed with a canopy, in her underwear.

There was not a single fragment of modesty in her behaviour. Even her underwear was a gaudy one famous among the ladies of the republic.

She did not wear the plain white ones provided by the sisters even once unlike Sariel.

For her, it was a matter of her own fashion sense but for others it only looked like selfishness.

But still, she was someone who had the title of an Apostle. There weren’t few who depended on her strength.

“fufufu.....to depend on me rather Sariel, it looks like there are a few with a good eye even among the Crusaders.”

In her hands were some official documents. The letter containing them had been roughly torn and thrown away somewhere.

“I came to Pandora continent, it would have been boring to just see Sariel’s face and just go back after saying goodbye after all.”

Misa made a smile like that of a child that just came up with a prank and threw away the documents after rolling and crumpling them up.

The paper that flew in the air let out a faint light just before falling on the ground.

Soon after, the light vanished and only the ashes remained.

“I don’t care whether they are demons or foreigners, I, 11th Apostle Misa, will personally pass judgement on all those who go against god!!”

Ahhahha, Misa laughed loudly.

That voice reached even the 3rd Apostle Mikael in the next room but the woman, who was like a mass of only love and motherhood, just loosened her cheeks and smile on hearing her over energetic neighbour.



Chapter 71 – Aftermath

When I woke up, it was in a room I have seen several times.

A truly lonely room with nothing except the plain bed of wood that I am sleeping on.

Looks like this is the guest room inside the adventurer guild.

“Goodmorning Kurono-san”

The moment I recognised the place I was, a familiar voice reached my ears, when I changed my line of sight there were two golden eyes.

“.....Fiona-san?”

“Yes, I am Fiona”

Her face was saying “What about it?”. Even though I say that her face was expressionless with eyes staring at me, it’s just that I thought so through the atmosphere around here.

A moment of silence appears between me and Fiona-san sitting on a chair just sideways to the bed.

“How long was I asleep?”

“Around 2 hours I think.”

I somewhat understand the situation.

The remaining adventurer’s lead by Fiona-san must have driven out the other Crusaders.

So it means, after exhausting the magic, I was carried to the Guild for resting.

I am really happy that it didn’t become like I fainted for 1 whole day like the previous time with Sariel.

I’ve got a lot to think about and do from now on.

“How is it the situation?”

“I got hungry and came here”

“No, not about Fiona-san but what is the situation of village?”

Why the hell would I have to ask about Fiona-san’s situation right now?

As expected this person is dislocated in the mental department.

“The vigilante corps have freed the captured villagers, and have started the evacuation towards Kuar Village.”

“Captured? So, everyone is alright?”

“It is hard to say that all villagers are alright, the Crusader that came here have already killed most of the villagers. If it was after they have been dragged as slaves, then I doubt there would have been any survivors in this village.”

“Slavery? Ha, it really came to this, something that is only written in history textbooks Damn it!”

The moment I saw the scene of those bastards occupying Daedalus, I predicted something like slavery would occur. They will take the young men for labour and the old people and sick people along with rebellious people would be massacred.

But, this prediction really became a reality , huh

“Bullshit!— Those son of bitches.....”

And, I was not able to save this village not even my friends.

After all this time, really, at this late regret and sadness swallows my heart. Right now in my hand is neither the cursed weapon that lets me forget everything due to anger, and neither the enemies in front on whom I can release all the anger.

An impulse to burst out crying and shout out grows inside of me.

“.....I will cry later.”

I close my eyes, and concentrate the time I use magic and calm down all the trembling emotions swelling inside me.

I have something I must do.

If there are villagers, then I have to evacuate them safely.

And, the Crusaders who will definitely come once again, I will have them taste the ground.

“Furthermore, I can’t always show uncool side of me.”

Pushing aside the white sheet covering my body, I rise up.

Besides me, is the figure of a small fairy lying down and holding me tight.

“Hey, Lily”

I gently brush the golden long hair of Lily, who is sleeping with a cute face.

I rise up from the bed without waking up Lily and wear the black robe folded and put near the bed.

My body feels fine, and there is not even a scratch on my black robe , the 'Baphomet's Embrace'.

The holes pierced during the time with Sariel and the burns from the Priest's magic have all been restored, as if there really is a real devil dwelling inside.

"But, why is Lily also sleeping here?"

"After you fainted, she came 'flying' till here. After laying you here, she was moving around and healing the injured villagers. After most of the healing was done, she dived into the bed naked shouting 'KuronoOO!!'. She might have gotten tired due to using healing magic a lot."

"She completed healing already? As expected of Lily, no one can match her. By the way, was it needed for you to explain that she dived into the bed naked."

"She looked very excited"

"Is that so, Lily is a small child so don't mind her being in her high spirits." The dress Lily was wearing had been thrown at the end of the bed.

"I see, my heart was really beating fast thinking what would start happening, I will try not to pay attention to both of you in bed from now on."

"Nh? un. well it's fine if you understand."

It doesn't seem like a good answer, but looks like Fiona-san is alright with it so let's leave it there.

"Then, I'll be going out for a while."

"Going to help?"

"Yeah, and I also have to do the memorial service for friends."

".....I see"

"What will Fiona-san do?"

"I have an important promise with Lily-san, so I will wait here till she wakes up."

"Promise?"

"Yes, it's a really really important promise. And I must not be a second late to fulfill it."

"I don't know what is it, but I'll leave Lily to you for the time being."

“Yes”

“Ah, you said you were hungry, right? I will bring food the while returning.”

“I see, that’s a grateful offer, then please bring it fast, must be sweet and a lot of it.”

After being requested in a very greedy way, I left the house.

It was officially announced that the vigilante corps along with adventurers and reinforcements repelled the Crusaders inside Irz Village.

But, if Kurono and Lily were not present, the Crusaders wouldn’t have backed down so easily. [ET: The author is a retard, he changed the perspective.]

Kurono alone killed near 100 Crusaders along with the Priest Kievan. Due to him the morale and number of soldier were reduced.

On top of that, even more bad luck to the soldiers was the fact that Corvus and all the magicians were dispatched for gaining control of fountain of light.

If the suppression unit sensed something unusual and returned to Irz Village, there is no doubt that Kurono would have had tables turned onto him.

However, that suppression unit was completely wiped out from the face of earth by the hands of Lily.

After losing the commander and most of the military force, the soldiers took the decision to escape.

Anyhow, the Crusaders who threw the Irz Villagers into the bottom of hell with fear have retreated and the villagers are evacuating to Kuar Village for refuge.

The evacuations was held without any problems.

The Irz right now, doesn’t have any military force to block the invasion from a big dragon or a swarm of monsters.

Hence during emergencies the villagers should escape, That is something told in every village.

Let it be being eaten by dragon, or being killed by Crusaders, the important people die, in spite of that the villagers face with reality and immediately try to evacuate.

There are cries here and there, some had mournful expressions and some had hollow eyes but still for survival they were moving their bodies.

Kurono desperately suppresses his overflowing emotions and helped the determined villagers in evacuation, he has already 'taken care' of the corpses of people.

There is an formal traditional funeral process in Irz, but there is not enough time for it as they Crusaders may come back anytime soon.

As there were a lot of corpses, in the end they were all burned as a substitute for funeral.

Without the satisfied number of coffins nor the gravesites, most of the corpses were put together and buried.

There was no other way than this to dispose of the corpses so there was no one who opposed these methods either.

There is nothing they can do other than apologising and crying for not giving them a proper funeral.

Kurono thought why did these people have to suffer this much while watching the corpses turn to ashes in the fire.

(If I had returned even 1 day earlier, I might have repelled the Crusaders
At the very least, the number of corpses would have been lower.

Thinking about a 'what if' situation when it has already occurred may be meaningless.

But, by reflecting on that fact for not being able to make it, the next time he might be able to do something when an emergency appears.

This time, towards the conclusion he wanted.

("The Crusader bastards will definitely come back, this time to Kuar and they will keep on coming. ")

Daedalus is defeated and dragon king is dead, it's better to think that this whole territory is now in the hands of Crusaders. That explains why an expedition group was dispatched to a countryside.

With no sufficient forces for repelling Crusaders, it's just a matter of time the territory is conquered. There is no safe place within this territory anymore.)

Kurono recalls the map of the whole eastern part of Daedalus continent, that he saw in Village head's home.

(Distance and terrain, no matter how one looks at it Spada is the only escape route left.)

From the west of the Irz Village that is located on the western edge in the territory of Daedalus, exists the Gallahad Mountain range and after crossing them is the City State Spada.

(The Spada has prepared an army for the invasion in Daedalus, I don't know what it is like, but it is the only place with a military force that can repel the Crusaders. The only problem is whether they will let an inhabitant from the enemy country Daedalus to take refuge on their side.....no, the refugee problems aren't something that would be even solved like modern times.

No matter what I think, it won't help me.)

The problems whether they will take in a person from enemy nation or even if they aren't enemies will they take an refugee from a foreign country.

The answers to these political like problems is impossible for Kurono to solve who was an High schooler and is an adventurer for 3 months.

Hence, Kurono concludes, to think when the time comes.

(More than that, one more problem is whether those bastards let us run off easily. It is a good if the evacuation ends before an expedition group comes, but what if we don't make it before them? What if they send a pursuit unit after the refugees? Will we be able to run off to Spada without any obstacles?)

Kurono exhaled a sigh and muttered.

"It's not, will we be able to, but we definitely will!"

Kurono once again realizes the thing he should be doing right now.

(If those bastards come after us I will stop them, I will protect them this time! For sure!)

Chapter 72 - Evacuation Start (1)

“ooh, thank god our place was safe!”

After approximately 1 week, we returned back to our home inside the forest.

I was afraid that it might have been found by the Crusaders while going to the fountain of light and put to fire, but it looks like it was safe.

The evacuation of Irz village is almost over and currently the villagers are moving to the Kuar village with their belongings.

Since there was nothing left for me to help with, this time we came back to prepare for our own moving out.

“I’m back.”

“I’m back!”

(T/N: kurono and lily said ‘Tadaima’ which is usually said by Japanese when coming back home.)

My and Lily’s energetic voice resounded inside the small room.

“Pardon the intrusion.”

And behind us came the voice of a girl. She was the mysterious witch Fiona Soleil.

Why is she here? I wondered that but somehow she came with the flow and there really wasn’t any reason to refuse her either.

“Come to think of it, she is the second person to have come here as a guest, right?”

That guest no. 2 sat down on the bed where Lily was rolling on and looked at me with serious eyes.

“Kurono-san, I have something very important to talk about.”(Fiona)

“With me?”(kurono)

“Yes. Since Lily-san returned to her child form, only you can complete it now.”

Aa, now that I think about it, Fiona-san was telling me about some promise with Lily earlier as well.

After I had returned to the guild, she started quietly eating the bread and soup I brought so I didn't hear the details yet.

But what's making me more curious is what she said about Lily's 'child form'.

“Did you perhaps meet with the older Lily?” (kurono)

“Yes, I didn't think that girl could turn back into such a pure looking child.” (Fiona)

What? Isn't the older Lily also super cute and even more beautiful than the current Lily? Maybe she was surprised due to suddenly seeing her mature form?

Well whatever. What's important is the promise that Lily made with Fiona-san.

“So, what's this promise?”

“Yes, that's—“

For a second I was worried if the promise was to pay the reward, enough to bankrupt me, for saving me.

What kind of promise did you make Lily!?!

By the Lily is currently playing on the bed while using a Frankensteiner on a big pillow and is unaware of my worries. (T/N: Frankensteiner is a wrestling move. Google it.)

“That is?” (kurono)

“That is to let me eat as much ice candy as I want.” (Fiona)

“.....What?” (kurono)

“To let me eat ice candy 'as much as I want'.”

With emphasis on the 'as much as I want' part, Fiona-san repeated it once more.

"You'll let me eat, right?" (Fiona)

She looked at me with a gaze that implied that she would burn down this hut if I said no.

Well, she did help me after all. I don't really mind making some ice candy for her.

"I don't have much ingredients so I want be able to make a lot of them though."

"I see, that's fine. Then please start."

And thus, before we started packing to move out, I first made some ice candy for her.

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From the 4th of the month of Ryokufuu till the 20th of the month of Shinyou, it wasn't long but we vacated the hut where I had a lot of unforgettable memories and finally reached the Kuar village by the evening.

After I had Fiona-san eat a lot of ice candy's made from various ingredients, she returned sleepily back to the Kuar village guild.

Lily and my lodging would also be the same as adventurers but before that there is something we must do.

"It'd be nice if they properly listen to us though."

I wanted to let as many people I can know about the [death of the dragon king] and [fall of Daidalos]. So I first came to the house of Kuar village's head.

The house which was used as the place for solving the problems of the villagers was currently filled with the refugees.

They must be also troubled since they did not know about the situation.

But from my point of view who knew about the Crusaders, the best decision that can be taken right now was to evacuate to Spada as quickly as possible. If we don't take action soon, it'll already be too late.

But the problem is, since I wasn't even acquainted with the Kuar village's head, I wonder if they would believe a rank 1 adventurer like me.

Although I am a bit anxious, nothing would start unless I actually talk.

"Alright, let's go Lily!"

"Un!"

Hardening my resolve, I stepped into the village head's house.

Chapter 73 - Evacuation Start (2)

Kuar village was a very important point for transport as it was connected to both the north-west and south-west highways. Thus, it was much bigger than Irz village and proportionately, the house of the Village head was also a magnificent one.

It is a three storey building in which the first floor (or ground floor for some guys) was used as a public space for meetings etc., and the 2nd and 3rd floor was used as the residence.

Currently on the first floor, numerous troubled villagers are standing who are being consulted by the village head, vigilante corps leader and the guild master of Kuar, in the centre of the area.

“An army made of numbers is no trouble! Those bastards ran away after just looking at our brave vigilante corps! Cowards like those will be no trouble no matter how many come!!”

The person giving this fervent speech was the leader of the vigilante corps and son of the village head, a man named Nachim.

After hearing the report that rescue team sent to Irz village had easily driven the enemy army away, he was suggesting resisting while staying in the Kuar village.

During the morning, when refugees started appearing, everyone was suggesting to evacuate since they only knew that the enemy was an army of humans.

And so, the villagers of Kuar were ready to evacuate whenever required.

But, after learning that the rescue team had easily won, and the enemy army wasn't very tough, at least Nachim came to this decision.

The villagers could evacuate quickly, but that didn't mean that they had no problems in leaving their homes and living the lives of refugees.

Nachim, while emphasizing that 'he will lead', was against the evacuation while shouting about how the rescue team brilliantly won as if he himself had done it.

But in fact, most of the rescue team was made of adventurers and there were few members of vigilante corps.

Obviously, Nachim himself didn't even take part in the rescue team and stayed in Kuar village to 'watch over the changes in the situation'.

"Is there any need to run away against a band of thieves?!"(nachim)

"uuu~hm....."

The village head, Nahad, pondered over it with a bitter face. He was reluctant to accept his son's decision to stay and fight and was unsure of victory.

Although he was young compared to Shione who was an elf, Nahad was still a 60 yr old human and was much more experienced. He probably will not take a rash decision.

But Nachim could only think of his father as someone who has become a coward with age.

"Hmm, what does the Guild Master think? After hearing the reports, is there a threat from the enemy army?"(Nahad)

"From just the reports, there were 3 magicians and soldiers with spears and bows. A hundred man army is certainly formidable but with just humans who have neither special strength nor any Extra magic, and no one who could use martial arts even, we'll be fine even if they attack us with twice the numbers."

"Indeed. We even defeated the three magicians. An army of just humans are the same as goblins no matter what the number."

The three magicians, Kievan and the others, who must have been recognised as magicians from their clothes were not even defeated by the rescue team either.

But, since it was unclear as to who did it, they decided to make it their own achievement.

"The Kuar village has much more adventurers and vigilante corps than Irz. We drove off an army of more than 100 with just a rescue squad, this Kuar village that is protected by a stone wall will not fall even if a thousand come!!"

Due to his over confident speech, the people here are changing their minds from evacuating to resisting.

Even the village head was shifting towards that idea.

“Village head, an adventurer of Irz village named Kurono would like to talk.”

A villager spoke to the Head.

“I thought the adventurers of Irz had all perished?”

“It seems he was away on a different quest. He came to Kuar this morning and instantly ran towards Irz after hearing the situation.”

“Oh, I did hear something like that. I see, so he survived and returned. It seems the rescue team made it in time.”

It was about an unknown adventurer yet he seemed relieved on hearing that.

“So, what should we do?”(villager)

“Yes, let him through. I want to hear from someone who actually saw what happened.”(Head)

Acknowledging, the messenger left the room.

“Everyone, it seems an adventurer from Irz wants to talk so let’s hear more about what happened at the actual place.”(Head)

The room became a bit noisy but no one openly opposed it.

“Adventurer of Irz, Kurono, come inside.”

With the Head’s words, the doors opened, and Kurono who was dressed in full black along with Lily came in.

“Pardon the intrusion. I am a rank 1 adventurer from Irz village, Kurono.”(kurono)

“fu, rank 1? A total newbie?”

It was just a village meeting, but Nachim was acting like some feudal lord.

Kurono clearly heard those discriminatory words but without even reacting he cut straight to the point.

“Firstly, I’ll tell what I have seen in Daedalus directly.”(kuroono)

“Daedalus? Wasn’t it supposed to be sealed right now?”

The Head asked.

“I felt unrest so I decided to enter illegally.”(kuroono)

“I see. I can’t find faults in your actions right now either. So, what did you see?”

Kurono spoke in a single breath.

“The Dragon King Gaevinal is dead and Daedalus has been captured.”

“Impossible?!?”

Nachim shouted in surprise. But everyone else here were also surprised. Even the Head and the Guild master had widened their eyes.

“Don’t go around saying something so improper!! Do you even understand the current situation——“

Nachim angrily drew his sword from his waist towards Kurono but,

“Calm down Nachim, everyone else as well. First let us hear the details.”

The Head somehow calmed the surroundings and urged Kurono to continue.

“The ones who have captured Daedalus is an army of humans that came from the Arc continent called the Crusaders. They are the same people that had built up Virginia on the cost around a year back.”(kurono)

The Head was of course aware of the town called Virginia.

But he had also heard that it was a worthless existence when compared to the army of Daedalus and the Dragon King.

“As you say, the army of Daedalus had completely stopped the humans of Virginia, but a few months back a large scale reinforcement army was dispatched. I don’t know the exact numbers but the Crusaders certainly defeated the army of Daedalus and the Dragon King Gaevinal was killed in battle. The order to seal off highways was probably sent soon after they had captured Daedalus.”(kurono)

“umumu, to think something like that had happened is truly unbelievable.....”

Even if they can't reject it clearly but they can't accept it easily as well.

“But, the Crusaders came to Irz Village. It was only a minor part of their true army. Even if we drove them back now, they'll soon come back with a new force to capture the village.

It'll be too late if you don't start evacuating now, please.”

Kurono pleaded them seriously but the fact that the dragon king had died and daedalus had been captured was not something these people, who lived under the dragon king and sang his praises, could easily accept.

Even the Village Head could not accept this type of fact so suddenly.

So would the short tempered Nachim accept something said by a rank 1 adventurer?

“It's a lie. It's definitely a lie! All this talk is just bullshit. This man has gone mad due to his home being attacked!! He is thinking the band of thieves is a part of an army!!”

Even Kurono got pissed on being treated as a mad man, but he somehow bared with it, and spoke the truth.

“I clearly saw the flag of Cross emblem in Daedalus royal castle.”(kurono)

“You just saw weong! That dragon king was killed? Daedalus has fallen? That's impossible until and unless the old Demon King has appeared!!!”

Kurono also replied while raising his voice.

“If you don't believe it then try interrogating one of the captured soldiers!”

“fun, truly a pitiful guy, but be relieved. We will protect this village. You can go sleep on the bed of the guild while shivering and praying to your god.”

In front of Nachim who was clearly scorning him, rather than getting angry, Kurono instead became impatient.

If they don't believe him here, then the evacuation to Spada will not start.

And to top it off, this guys is actually thinking of fighting by themselves.

Certainly, Kuar has many times the number of vigilantes and adventurers when compared to Irz but no way can they stop the Crusaders who number in ten thousands.

If they are surrounded, all the villagers will definitely be massacred.

Kurono started sweating from his forehead. He had to start evacuation by any means possible.

“Believe me! It’s all true!! It’ll be too late if we don’t start evacuating now!!”

“ugh silence you madman! We have no time to go along with your farce! Oi, someone throw this man out!!”

It can’t be helped that the villagers could not decide who was right without proper information.

Even the village head, was doubting Kurono’s words.

The room was filled with noise. Did the dragon king really die? What about Daedalus? Is it all a lie? Isn’t he just a mad adventurer?

And inside that noise,

“Filthy pig who made fun of my Kurono, I’ll kill you.”

Lily who quietly murmured was not heard but anyone, even Kurono.

As Kurono was thinking hard how to convince the villagers, Lily pulled Kurono’s robe.

“What is it Lily? Right now——-“

“Kurono, leave this place to me.”

As Lily gave a smile, Kurono realized that an intelligent light was shining in her eyes.

“Lily——-“

He called, but Lily left from near his feet and moved towards the seat where the Head and others were.

And with the flapping of the 7-coloured wings she rose in mid air and floated in front of the Head.

“It has been a long time, Village Head Nahad.” (lily)

The Head raised a voice in surprise on seeing her.

“Li, Lily-san, why are you here.....”

“ufufu, it’s a good thing to see you in high spirits. You won’t need the miracle drug for some time like this.”

In his head, the small figure of the fairy that appeared near his pillow when he had fallen ill and resolved for death a few decades ago, appeared.

After that, he took Lily’s miracle drug once in a year and had been fit ever since.

But, the lily who had an attitude as per her appearance and was always naked like a normal fairy, was currently showing fluent speech as well as was dressed in a black dress, this made the Head feel very unusual.

Lily quickly sensed the unease in his emotions.

“aa, this is the true me, so don’t worry too much about it Head-san.”

“So, what could be the matter? As you can see we are currently in an extremely complicated situation–“

“It’s alright. I understand everything. And I am also saying that whatever Kurono is saying is also true.”

“True, you say?”

Looking at Lily who was serious for the first time, the Head gulped in.

“Ee, the dragon king is dead, Daedalus has been captured, and the ones who did it were truly the fearsome army of humans called Crusaders. It’s all true.”

“No, no way.....”

“You should know as well, fairies can never lie.”

The room had gotten completely silent.

The villagers, even Nachim, could only believe it if Lily who was a fairy said ‘it is true’.

That's because fairies 'cannot lie', thus they can only accept it even without any proof.

In actuality, Lily who was a half-fairy, especially now where she had her intelligence as well, could easily lie if she wanted to but the people here didn't know that.

Thus, no one doubted that Lily's words were true or not.

"I had gone with Kurono to Daedalus myself and I clearly saw it with my own eyes. The flag that flew in the royal castle as well as the monster human that has the power to kill the dragon king."

"oh..oo.....how can this be....."

This time the village head was truly grieving from the truth thrust in front of him by Lily.

"Hear me. The country known as Daedalus has fallen. The territory will be ruled by the Crusaders. If you don't run away now, you will face the same end as Irz. It's impossible to negotiate with them. The human believers of the Cross call us as demons and are truly trying to kill us all. There is only one way to live, quickly start evacuating towards Spada."

"Sp, to Spada?!?!"

The one who raised his voice was not the Head but Nachim.

The two countries saw each other as enemies. Nachim had been dreaming of entering the army when the time to attack Spada came.

To evacuate to there was somewhat difficult to accept even for the villagers as well.

"You have been loud from the start. Will you shut up already!?" (lily)

On being looked upon as trash by the small girl Lily, Nachim got angry,

"o,oooo.....ii....."

Or he was about to but Nachim somehow felt a sense of pleasure. He got 'charmed' by Lily's cold expression.

The magic of charming existed in beautiful beings of this world. It activated at a pretty amazing timing, but anyway Nachim who had been [charmed], looked at Lily like a girl smitten in love and didn't raise any voice.

As if forgetting his existence altogether, Lily looked back towards the Head.

"Head-san, I understand that it'll be tough but you have no choice but to abandon the Kuar village. Even we fairies have already abandoned our home—"

And Lily brought out the Artifact, Queen Beryl.

"This, this is, no way....."

In front of the dense magical energy, even village head who had no real knowledge of magic, understood what it was.

"That's right. This is the jewel that brought about the divine protection in the fountain of light. But due to the coming of Crusaders, the divine protection of the fairy queen has been lost. 'We' fought hard against them but the fountain of light will never return to what it was."

With Lily's sad words, the village head could understand what might have happened to that sacred place.

At the same time, Kurono also heard about this for the first time but didn't show much surprise since he probably might have guessed it already.

"Now you understand right? What you people are supposed to do now?"

Saying that, Lily returned to Kurono's side and left while pulling his arm with her.

".....Let's run away. To Spada."(nahad)

And thus, the bell of evacuation of Kuar village rang inside the village.

Chapter 74 - Detestable Woman (1)

With Irz as centre, in the opposite direction of Kuar village was a village which was currently being used as a base by the Crusaders. This unit was the same unit to which Kievan once belonged to.

After the messenger had left after giving the report, only the commander of the unit and his aide were remaining.

“To think that Kievan’s squad was annihilated, was there a dragon or something in the Irz village?”

The one who frowned as he said that was the commander, Priest Head Norz.

On his waist hung a steel mace. He looked like a warrior Monk and was a man in his middle ages.

“Not a dragon but a ‘devil’. Were you not listening?”

It was definitely not a way to talk to a superior, but the one who had said that with a cold gaze was the aide, Sister Sylvia.

With red flame like hair and a comfortable habit that showed her bodyline, it was a truly stylish look.

Norz looked at her giant breasts that were lifted as she folded her arms beneath them, but he only sighed in irritation rather than getting aroused.

(“This damned redhead! She only speaks irritating things everytime she opens her damned mouth!!”)

The only reason he didn’t say this out loud was not because he was a feminist but because the one who selected her as his aide specially was Cardinal Mercedes himself.

No matter how charming she was, he was not an idiot enough to lay his hands on the woman of his superior.

Of course, the Cardinal could not protect her in this faraway Pandora continent and Norz could kill her whenever he wanted.

But, if she didn't return alive, it'll only lead to a drop in his own reputation as a commander and not to mention that he might incur the Cardinal's personal enmity as well.

Although not as outspoken as Kievan, even he had his own aspirations and so having Sylvia return alive safely had become an important part to get his promotion.

For his own bright future he somehow held himself back.

"I know. In actuality, it must have been a black magician adventurer with high skill."(Norz)

"I am more interested in the existence that annihilated the force that went to gain control of the sanctuary (T/N: she's talking about the fountain)."(Sylvia)

"They might have been attacked by just monsters though. They call the forest a dungeon after all."

They might have encountered an unexpectedly strong monster and might have gotten themselves annihilated.

But still, if that was not so, then it meant that there was an enemy army among the enemy demons that has the power to destroy a whole squad.

Along with the 'devil' that destroyed Kievan's party, there was also an 'army of demons' that could annihilate the whole suppression squad. That meant that the enemies would be much more troublesome than he thought.

"In any case, we should quickly dispatch a scouting squad."(Sylvia)

To Sylvia's opinion, Norz replied,

"I'll leave info gathering to you. Do as you wish."(Norz)

"I would do so even if you didn't say that."(Sylvia)

Tch, while clicking his tongue, Norz continued his words.

"We'll complete the controlling of this village by tomorrow. After that we'll move the main force towards Irz. In the end, there's no change to that."

There was no need to panic; they won't let a capturable land get away.

Within this one month, Norz thought to finish his work without any delays.

“But still, to have lost the whole of Kievan’s squad is a bit severe.” (Sylvia)

“It doesn’t matter even if that pretentious brat dies.” (Norz)

“At least he was a better warrior than you.”

A vein popped out on Norz’s temple, but as if not even noticing her superior’s reaction, Sylvia continued speaking.

“Kievan’s squad had quite a lot of magicians, and the soldiers weren’t some newbies either. Counting the number——”

“Aa~Aa~ I get it, I get it, it was my fault!” (Norz)

If he kept on hearing this quietly, Norz felt that he’ll end up punching this beautiful woman in her face and so decided to yield first.

“As long as you understand. If you can’t even grasp the abilities of your soldiers properly, you fail as a commander. Nobody will entrust their lives to you. Also, the demons have resisted at much bigger level than ever before. Try not be so careless, Priest Head Norz. Now then, I need to select the members for the scout team so I’ll excuse myself.”

Sylvia left without sparing even a single glance towards Norz, left the house.

“Shit, she really is a nasty woman!!”

Chapter 75 – Nasty Woman

“What are you planning to do from now on, Kuroono?”

When I returned to Kuar Village’s adventurer guild, I questioned Kuroono. I can keep my conscience of the adult me by borrowing the power from Queen Beryl, though my appearance doesn’t change.

That’s why I can talk with Kuroono about serious matters. I did a good job in bringing this.

“It’s already decided to escape to Spada. Naturally, I will guard the evacuation as an adventurer. The emergency quest will also be soon posted.”

What Kuroono is saying is right. I have persuaded village head Nahad and the emergency warning bell has already rung.

For abandoning the village, every villager will soon start evacuating as a form of mass mobilization. Furthermore, the non-villagers in other words the adventurers will also have to cooperate under the name of emergency quest.

The Adventurer Guild are spread all over the Pandora continent. Even if Daedalus has collapsed, we can still get the reward for emergency quest in Spada.

It is a dangerous quest when we don’t even know the war potential of the enemy, but there is no reason to refuse when we can get an equivalent reward.

“I won’t know how things will end up unless I don’t work.”

Kuroono is saying the right thing as an rank 1 adventurer, but

“It is bad then Kuroono. Try to think what will happen from now on.”

Kuroono makes a surprised face for a moment as if he thought he won’t be said something like or that thing from the child me and then speaks

“The biggest problem is whether Spada will accept us or not, isn’t it? I also don’t know whether they will accept the petition which we sent along with the messenger. The second is how to act when the pursuit squad of the Crusaders come after us. It will be really good if Spada deploy soldiers for the safety of refugees but even that might be futile due to us being from

Daedalus. So in the end us adventurers and vigilante corps should make countermeasures, don't you think so?"

Un, You're right.

Without any hope of getting reinforcements from outside, we have to make our way somehow using the war potential at hand.

"It's useless to think about the entry in Spada right now, it will work one way or another if we make racket near the national border. The problem right now is how the adventurer coming along with us will act." (Lily)

The head of the vigilante corps is that person, that pig, a man without any distinction. A smooth undisturbed cooperation is most likely a hope.

Without any hope there it's best to leave that matter alone. For the time being it's to think about the adventurers.

"After this many adventurers will meet us. Kuar has more adventurers than irz, and along the way to Spada there are many villages, so the adventurers will keep on adding. First we have to decide who will stand on top, though they might work on equal terms too."

"Yep, that's what I wanted to say"

"Who will stand on top?"

He returns an understanding phrase with a big smile, then Kurono sighs with a painful expression. Ufufu he has good perceptiveness.

"By any chance, you saying I should stand on top?"

"That's right! Work hard Kurono!"

"No, no way in hell, it is impossible, after all I'm a rank 1 adventurer? In these situations only the one with the top rank does the job. I heard here is a party of rank 4, shouldn't they fit the job."

If there are quests requiring multiple parties cooperation, then it is natural for the person with the most top rank to lead them.

It's not like the rank is everything, that is only for exception within the the top rankers which is full of those who are not popular or are only strong.

Having a big rank is the proof of experience and strength. With just that much of career a person's name can be well known within other parties.

Even a person with somewhat low rank can become a leader if he has a lot of connections with many people and is well-known.

At this point, the people knowing Kurono the adventurers from Irz are all annihilated, it's impossible for a Rank 1 person to become a leader.

"But Kurono you're forgetting the basic of the basics, the constant law of nature."

"Haa?"

"Ufufu, the strongest person stands at the top."

It might not be understandable to Kurono who came from a peaceful world, but the survival of fittest is the most basic principle and theory in this world.

That is something even the monsters know, there are no flocks of them with a weak person as their boss.

That is even applied in our society, furthermore within the adventurer who are accompanied with some problems all the time. The strength cannot be changed and is the most valued thing here.

Popularity? Virtue? Things like that don't matter, there is no adventurer here who objects for the most strong person to lead them.

"Oh, Then isn't Lily the most strong her—"

"Don't mind me!!"

"I, I see....."

It is good if Kurono understood me.

"But that isn't the only reason for why should you be leading the adventurers. Only Kurono knows the strength of Crusaders within the adventurers here. And if someone from that rescue unit was to lead, they will make a big mistake at the start by underestimating them."

At the very least, that pig claiming to be the leader of the unit will definitely make a mistake.

First of all, they don't have analysed their war potential at all. They are just muscle-brained idiots who are contempt with them dying on the front lines in a flashy manner.

"That's true, I don't think they will not underestimate the crusader."

"Isn't that right, the enemy's war potential is overwhelming, we will be wiped out if we make even one mistake. I don't want to fight under

someone I cannot trust. Ah, maybe I should say I won't fight unless Kurono is the leader."

Kurono shows a surprised expression on hearing those words.

But I have to clearly say these things.

"Even I don't want to do something that will massacre all the refugees but you see the most thing for me is that I and Kurono survive. You are giving of the vibe that you will fight even if you have to throw your life away. I'm really worried."

The half of the speech was a complete lie, I don't give a shit about abandoning the lives of others.

I don't even have to compare the value of Kurono and other people. This won't change even if compared to hundred of people or thousands of people.

But I don't want Kurono to know about all of this. It's fine if he understands only the good parts like I'm concerned about his well being for now.

"Sorry.....It's just as you say. Furthermore Lily even healed the villagers and is being more helpful than me."

Ah, I only did that thinking it would improve your mental health, don't worry about it.

"I'm happy that you're worried about me, but, just because of something like that I can't stop fighting. Fighting is all I can do."

"er well..., I'm not stopping you from doing even that. But you know right, that when fighting with life on line you have to fight with all the cards you have."

"Aa, the danger level is completely different from the rank 1 quests, I can't just leave it to others. Okay, I will become the leader of adventurers."

Kurono declares boldly. As expected his face full of vigor is really awesome. Go for it! While passing on the ale to him, I'm secretly make my heart flutter.

"But, I don't have even a pinch of experience in leading. So you will become my support."

"Leave it to me!"

But even I don't have an experience of that sort.

Not like it matters. I will use each and every other adventurer for my and Kurono's sake.

Worst case, only we both reach Spada. Well, they should do their best by at least becoming the baits or something for us.



Chapter 76 - With the seat of Leader on the line

Inside the lobby of the Kuar village guild, numerous adventurers could be seen.

Currently, every adventurer of Kuar as well as those that were currently here coincidentally had gathered here, so it was only natural that it would be crowded.

Usually, adventurers are on their quests and wouldn't be together like this but---

Emergency Quest – Escorting the evacuees

Reward – Undecided

Deadline – Undecided

Client – Daedalus Adventurer Guild

Quest details – it has been decided that all villagers will be evacuated to Spada. The escort along the journey will be done by the Vigilante corps of the respective villages. The adventurers are required to act as the rear guard and protect the villagers from the enemy. Details regarding the enemy are only that it is an army of humans. It is a quest of danger level exceeding any of those till now but the lives of all the villagers are riding on you people. Brave adventurers please take part.

.

And thus, each and every adventurer here was compulsorily made to accept the emergency quest.

Every adventurer here knew what an emergency quest meant of course but their concern was regarding how to complete this quest.

And currently the 9 parties and 10-odd solo adventurers, a total of 50 adventurers, were talking to decide who will be the one in lead right now.

“Ha! A small-fry who isn't even rank 4 should stay out of this!!”

No, to be exact, they were fighting with each other.

The light armoured adventurer was blown away with a dull sound.

Where he fell lay many other who couldn't move any more.

"I will be the one to lead you bastards!! Anybody who gotta a problem with dat step forward!!" (T/N: he speaks roughly so that was the best I could do. Sounds like a wannabe tho lol)

The one who howled that was a 2 meter tall werewolf.

But he wasn't just huge, trained muscles could be seen behind his grey fur, and numerous old scars all over his body displayed his amazing experience as well.

"What happened?! Is there no one who can take on this immortal Vulcan-sama!? (T/N:yeah he calls himself with a 'sama')

The fight for the position of the leader had been overwhelmed by this werewolf called Vulcan.

The shining gold guild card hanging around his neck was a proof of his rank.

Among the few rank 4 adventurers in Kuar village, he was clearly above in power.

The rank 4 party Kurono was talking about was his [Vulcan Powered].

All the adventurers understood that to have his own name in the party name so grandly meant that he was the strongest even in his team and it was a stereotypical one-man team.

And in fact, everyone except Vulcan were rank 3 adventurers.

Party rank was not raised due to a single member's rank, but to have a rank 4 party even with everyone else at rank 3 meant that the guild had acknowledged that he alone gave the whole party the strength of a rank 4 party.

"fun, if there's no one left then it's decided."

Vulcan looked at the surrounding adventurers with a sharp eye so as to overpower them.

Although it had become a fight in the end, Vulcan's power was acknowledged by everyone and besides he even had the experience as the leader of a party so the adventurers weren't really dissatisfied. Either.

With the words [It's decided], silence finally came to the lobby.

The moment he smiled while seeing that there were no objections,

"Wait."

A single man came in front of him.

"HUUH?"

A man dressed in complete black with black hair and black eyes.

Although he was tall for a human, but from Vulcan's point of view, everyone was small.

"I'll become the leader after defeating you."

"Ohho?"

To have said that straight like him, there was no one among those he had blown away just now.

And in actuality, someone who was dissatisfied with Vulcan had come to hit him.

"Alright. Come at me boy. Don't think I'll hold back just 'cause you're a weak little human magician, alright?"

Cracking his fists, Vulcan released a beast-like bloodlust.

"I'm not a boy, my name is Kurono."

Kurono who showed no signs of getting scared, Vulcan wondered whether he had confidence in his skills or was he just an idiot.

"Alright Kurono, I'll say this just in case but no use of weapons is allowed. If you try and defeat me with a hidden weapon, no one's gonna follow ya."

"I know. I'll fight bare handed."

Vulcan became sure of his victory.

("A magician bare handed could never defeat me. I'm not called immortal for nothing boy. Well, I ain't gonna lose even if he used weapons though.")

Magicians can use magic even without staffs or grimoires but the power would clearly fall a lot.

It's not like a magician can't use a strong magic even without them, he could use one after a long chant, but in such a situation where the distance between them was less than 10m, a magician could only fight back with a single action magic.

If the magician can defeat with his single action then he can surely win, but if it fails to defeat then obviously he will definitely lose. Even a magician could try punching back at least once though.

Vulcan who was called the immortal, had confidence in his physical strength, but that's not all. He also had the Extra magic of the werewolves [Auto Heal] as well.

As the name implies, it had the effect of healing any part that got damaged.

But since it takes time for the healing to complete, if a damage like getting his heart pierced, or head chopped off, or a similar attack, was taken, he would still die instantly.

Except those, he could reduce any other damage to almost null, especially in a fist fight like this where only small attacks are allowed.

Thus, whether it be a magician's punch or single action, he could take them on ten times and still be standing normally.

From the common sense of an Adventurer, a single action could only be used once or twice consecutively which was the limit for a magician.

("No matter what, he won't be able to fire more than 4 times. Even if this boy's power of a single shot was many times stronger than a normal magician, he still would never be able to defeat me.")

Vulcan took his stance, it didn't matter if fire came or thunder came, he decided to charge straight forward and punch this impudent magician directly on his face.

"I'll wait till you fire, after all, it'll be boring if you fall without getting to fire even once right?"

“Why thank you—here I come.”

“Come at me!”

DON!! A sound resounded twice at the same time.

One was due to Vulcan stepping on the floor and the other was Kurono firing his magic.

A black bullet was fired towards Vulcan’s body.

(“Something like this will never—”)

Stop him. Every adventurer here thought the same.

But, that was only if it was just a single shot.

“Magic bullet arts – release all bullets Full Burst.”

Instantly, numerous black bullets rushed towards the giant enemy Vulcan.

“Gaaaaaaaaahhh!!!!”

Vulcan could take on ten single action attacks consecutively but what would happen if it was a 100 shots or a 1000 shots.

Of course, there was no way he could take it on.

To avoid injuring him fatally, the bullets were softer as well as the head was made round, but the impact was still the same. A normal human would have fainted with just a single shot.

Vulcan certainly withstood ten attacks but the damage that was dealt in an instant was too much to be covered by his Auto Heal.

“Guh.....oo.....”

After he was 2m near Kurono he finally fell to his knees.

By that time, all the bullets from [Load] were also used up.

“To not faint even after taking all the bullets, as expected of a Rank 4, you’re pretty tough.”

As Kurono admired the figure of Vulcan who was still showing bloodlust and had yet to faint, Kurono dealt the final blow calmly without letting his guard down.

Raising his fist, he rushed forward by kicking the floor.

Why a magician would go all the way to use his fists, the gallery wondered but they soon got their answer.

Because Kurono released his fastest and first most original black magic.

Instantly magical energy concentrated in his arm.

“Pile Bunker.”

The concentrated magic that rotated like a drill had power incomparable to a single bullet.

Vulcan, who had been overwhelmed by the hail of bullets, had neither the physical strength nor the concentration to stop it.

Black magical energy released from Kurono’s arm and dull sound of hitting Vulcan’s body reverberated inside the whole guild.

In just a few seconds, the battle had concluded.

Vulcan fell on the floor as he lost his consciousness as Kurono declared in an imposing voice.

“I am the leader. Anybody who has a problem with that, step forward.”

It was the same line Vulcan had said just a moment ago.

And thus, not a single one came out who objected this.

Chapter 77 – Formation (1)

During the time Kurono was in a battle with Vulcan for the leadership of adventurers, in a certain guest room there were Fiona and Lily.

“What did you want to talk fairy-san?”

“I was thinking of making an agreement with you”

Though Lily is in her small form, but it can be concluded that her consciousness was of her original form from her way of answering the question from Fiona-san.

“What sort of agreement?”

“I want you to form a party with us.”

The meaning of the words Lily spoke can be understood by any adventurer, no, any common person in this world.

The basics of adventurer are obviously to fight along with comrades, the party play strategy.

It is not rare for someone to have a good cooperative relationship with any unfamiliar adventurer due to completing one quest together, but normally people complete quests with their own pre formed parties.

After submitting the Party name and the names of all the members of the party, it is then treated as an official party.

Still, it is not a problem to join up with another person and complete a quest without registering as a party. Through registering as a party, it is easy for gaining guild's favor and also easy to appeal the accomplishment of the works of party.

“A party with you and Kurono-san ?”

“Un, we still haven't thought of any name for the party but if you enter, we will have to. So how about it?”

Fiona wavered for a second and,

“I refuse”

she refused without any hesitation.

“Is it alright for me to hear the reason?”

Lily doesn't show any signs of being mad at the answer, but rather she boldly smiles and questions.

It was an evil grin that she can not show to Kurono.

"I'm not good for this job. There is no party which has kept me after 3 days from forming the party, there is also the possibility of being kicked out during a quest"

Though Fiona is expressionless, that experience must have been a trauma for her. Lily sensed the slight waver in her stable heart.

But even after knowing it, Lily has not in the least of intention to comfort her.

It is important to get Fiona into Lily's pace and Fiona's feeling don't matter at all.

They can get a decent party which is impossible normally, just due to the addition of a very powerful witch named Fiona.

"I know you're unbelievably clumsy at control magic, still I'm asking for you to join."

"Why do you know that?"

Fiona inquires without showing a sign of being surprised.

"I've never seen anyone using a mere 'Ignis Shield' in a flashy manner as you did."

"I see, the fairy tribe are knowledgeable in magic."

Fiona is still not surprised, it was as if she had been told same thing before too.

"I am a special one, don't confuse me with those lousy flies."

At the very least, within the Kuar village only Lily has the most knowledge and analysing power for magic.

She has never learned about it, it is nothing more than something present in her from the time she was born.

"Let's put your feelings aside right now, but I want you to understand the concerns on my side."

Fiona unhesitantly asked '*What do you mean*' at Lily's words.

"I don't want to let a dangerous witch be free, who can burn 100 villages in all directions while Kurono is fighting Crusaders for the refugees to safely escape. Looks like I said it the wrong way? I'm the only one who values highly about your power. I definitely want that offensive power near me."

Lily speaks compliments with a lovely smile on her face.

“Thank you very much, you’re the second person to ever compliment me about my magic.”

Lily understood that the words spoken by Fiona are not sarcasm but from the bottom of her heart.

“Ufufu, looks like there are only idiots in Arc continent. And I’m not only taking you as a powerful adventurer but also as a higher position called ‘Comrade’. In this case, I will also offer you a place where you can use your ‘uncontrollable’ magic power without any restrictions. Well it is not me but Kurono who will think about this though.”

Fiona looks down while pondering.

Lily thinks that “Seems like one last push is needed”.

“If you’re a good adventurer who wants to save the pitiful villagers, then I really want you to come with us. If you want to return to Spada alone for self-protection, I won’t stop you and if you want to go back to being a Crusader , I will kill you right here.”

“I have no intention of going back to being a Crusader, and am thinking of helping with the emergency quest as an adventurer of Pandora Continent.”

Fiona replies immediately. Lily smiles as if the reply she gave was obvious.

“You’re honest. I can understand you have no lingering feelings with the Crusaders and you don’t like the massacre. And I think you have no reason to reject my offer?”

Fiona stills ponders.

But this time she swings her head vertically.

“That is right, if you’re willing to take me in, I don’t have a reason to reject.”

“I see, Thank you”

Lily welcomes Fiona with a big smile who agreed for the entering their party.

“Nh.....It is about time”

“For what?”

“There is no more time for me to retain my adult consciousness, so listen carefully.”

Fiona already knows about Lily having two consciousnesses, so she, without asking any questions, agrees.

“The leader of party is Kurono, he will be coming here soon. Properly do the introductions and then listen to his orders.”

“Understood.”

Fiona nods obediently.

“And for you to not get pulled to another party let me telling you our best points”

Though Lily is in small form , she sends a perfect wink to Fiona.

“What is it?”

“Kurono comes from a really, really far away country, so he makes many unfamiliar dishes, for the time you are with us you will get to eat various unfamiliar tasty foods. Ufufu don’t think that popsicles are the only sweet thing we have.”

Those words got attention of Fiona more than anything. It wasn’t required to even read her mind for that, as she bends and approaches towards Lily.

“Is that.....really true?”

“Un, a pudding for example.”

“Wh-What is that ‘Pudding’ food that seems really sweet with just it’s name.”

Fiona recalls every sweet taste she has tasted. but her expectations rise enormously due to an never heard food name.

“Find that out by yourself”

“I will confirm it immediately.”

Fiona replies with a voice of empty stomach.

“Ah, let me tell you one last rule to you.”

“What would it might be?”

Lily replied with a lovely smile mixed with a little bit of bloodlust mixed.

“Having romantic relationships is forbidden within our party, don’t forget this ever.”

After saying that. she falls down on the bed

Soon after that, a cute sleeping breath reaches the ears of Fiona.

Chapter 78 – Formation (2)

“Fuu.....It really was nerve wracking.....”

While sighing, I head towards the guest room where Lily is waiting.

But still how could I say “I am the leader. Anybody who has a problem with that, step forward.”. Ah, I’m so embarrassed.

Well, after demonstrating the power, an imposing attitude is needed after all.

Though I still have a great doubt whether how I acted was the right thing to do.

“Anyway, rank 4 really are dangerous.”

During the battle of Vulcan it might have looked like my one-sided victory, in truth I didn’t feel that much difference between our powers.

I was able to win just because I had good compatibility against him.

Vulcan is an power fighter just as he looks. He attacked with the intention of stopping my attacks directly.

Any ordinary magician wouldn’t be able to stop his charge and would be knocked out. After all he withstood my 10 magic bullets at point-blank range while suffering no damage at all.

Not only the toughness of his body, but also his power, speed, reaction speed and physical capacity were some levels above my enhanced body.

“I doubt if we once again fight, it would go this easy.”

For now let’s pray for that situation to never come.

According to Lily “After becoming a leader never show your weak side or else you’ll be underestimated.”. So I can’t show my uneasiness to Vulcan or others.

Well it might be fine for me to maintain my normal expression on face to naturally speak something like “Hey, don’t you dare slack off!”

While thinking that, I reach the guest room and knock at door.

“Lily, I’m back”

“Ah Kurono-san, come in”

Nh, this voice, is it Fiona-san?

The door opened, and there stood Fiona-san.

Upon entering the room, I find Lily lying down on bed, she must have gone to sleep due to tiredness.

"I heard Lily had some business with Fiona-san, is it over?"

I casually ask,

"Yes, I was told you have a sweet thing called 'Pudding'"

She replied with a tilted head.

"Ha? Pudding?"

"You don't have pudding?"

Fiona-san stares at me with golden eyes filled with extreme expectations.

"No, I don't have it? I didn't go away to cook you know?"

Even if you looks at me with those eyes, I can't help with things I don't have.

Fiona-san shows a depressed expression.

Eh, what is this feeling like I'm the bad guy here?

"If you want to eat it, I will make it later"

"Is it true?"

She suddenly got better, somehow this reaction reminds me of the time I gave her popsicle.

"I will make it later, right now it is impossible. I am busy with the emergency quest, I don't have the ingredients and don't expect that it will be very good or not."

"It will be fine. Let's work hard to safely complete the evacuation."

Thank you for brave words. I will find a kitchen when we reach Spada for sure.

"Then let us think about the name for our party at once."

"Eh?"

"Eh?"

Umm, looks like Fiona-san and I are not even on the same page?

What the hell was this talk about? Party? Is it the party for celebrating after the evacuation is completed?

"I'm a member of Kurono-san's party, aren't I?"

"Is that so?"

"Am I wrong?"

Hell with this conversation, always ending with a question mark.

Calm down, Don't lose myself, I have to somehow find the hidden meaning behind Fiona-san's completely unrelated words.

Talk with Lily, Pudding, Party member.....

"erm, was your talk with Lily regarding your addition to our party?"

"Yes"

Bingo! I'm completely right!

"I now understand, completely understand."

"I'm grateful that you have agreed to it."

OK, now were getting on the same page.

"I will ask this just for being convinced but, are you really alright with entering our party?"

"Yes, according to Lily-san, I'm an wild witch who can burn 100 villages in all directions but still, take care of me from now on."

Eeee, what is with that ultra-suspicious self-introduction. I never heard Lily giving that dangerous evaluation to Fiona-san.

"Is it alright for me to understand it as that you excel at using magic?"

"Yes, I have confidence in the 'firepower' of my magic. I can turn enemy and ally both to ash without any concerns."

Not putting in a tsukkomi here, I calm down myself and ask

".....Can't you just burn only the enemy to cinders?"

"I'm a little clumsy at controlling my magical power. Still I was passionately invited, so I decided to join the party."

Fiona-san snorts and puffs out her chest full of confidence.

"I-I see, well Lily is fine with it so there is no problem. Well then best regards from me too, You're welcome to our party."

I have no choice but to accept her in, though her self-introduction was completely suspicious.

Even I trust Fiona-san's magical firepower, after all she saved me from the rain of arrows with a wall of flame.

And she is also the saviour of my life, I have no more reason to refuse.

"Yes, thank you very much."

We both shake hands and here the agreement is completed.

"Kurono-san"

Fiona-san shows a painful expression, I wonder now what is she going to confess.

"This is something Lily-san knows, I want to tell you too."

"What is it?"

I wait for her next words being somewhat nervous.

"I'm a person from Arc continent."

".....what the hell"

"Do you detest me?"

I reflexively start accumulating magical power for firing of the magic bullets. Though she may have not known about that, she must have already read through me due to the bloodlust I am oozing unconsciously.

"Sorry, just wait a bit."

She came from Arc continent that would mean that she has the same position as that of the Crusaders.

Is she the same as those insane Crusaders who brought destruction to Irz Village. Is she the same kind and race as them? I cannot let her live, shouldn't I kill her right now?

"I am glad I didn't have the hatchet."

If I had, I would've been devoured by those emotions.

Calm down, right now it is important to hear the story of Fiona-san.

First of all she saved me and Lily also has accepted her that would mean she is not a bad person.

"I'm fine. Tell me your story."

"Yes, but from where should I start telling."

It is the manner of adventurers to not pry into someone's past, so it's better to leave it.

"Right now I don't want to hear about your life story or whether you were a Crusader or have you killed people on Pandora continent. Just tell me what you can tell."

"Understood, but I don't have any past that I must hide.

I went to the Magic School in Elysion, after graduating I didn't have any new aim so I participated in the expedition as a mercenary.

but the food was not good and the place was very uncomfortable, so I left."

‘You really betrayed them for such a reason?’, I ask unconsciously to her. This is not impossible if it is Fiona-san, but if told right to my face, it is hard to believe.

“I’m not a believer of Cross religion. And without taking any money I went through all the formalities for resigning, so I doubt that I betrayed them.”

“But will you be fine fighting the people from your home country with us.” On that question, Fiona-san replied with sleepy face saying not like I care, so I’m fine.

“Country, Religion, Human or Demon, I don’t care about any of that. Kurono-san you can think of me like yourself, a traveller who came here just on whim for a faraway place.”

“Did you hear that from Lily?”

“I only heard you’re an inhabitant of a really far country. That’s why, think of my place of origin as meaningless, and I also don’t have any lingering affection towards it,”

I don’t know what place Arc continent is exactly like, but I can somewhat understand what Fiona-san is trying to say.

In short, she has nothing she wants to protect.

I don’t care if it’s a good thing or a bad thing, anyways the person known as Fiona-san is not affiliated to anywhere.

“I got it, I will trust you and you’re already a member of our party.”

“Is that really alright? I did participate in the previous invasion and have killed many people, are you willing to forgive that too?”

“It’s alright, that was your work as a mercenary, it’s just that now that has changed to some other work.”

I am already a murder myself, so I have no right to tell her that she has done wrong.

“I’m really grateful.”

“In Fact, I am really grateful that Fiona-san is an inhabitant of Arc continent.”

Now that I think about it, I, no, every adventurer and villager present here doesn’t know a single thing about Crusaders.

It is the situation where we have to fight an unknown enemy.

“I also roamed around the village a bit, but there wasn’t any person who knows about the the Crusaders or the Republic.”

“That’s right, even I have only heard that the name of the country is ‘Republic’”.

Information is the important factor at every time, and even more important when there is a fight with lives at stake.

There are many words claiming the importance of information like ‘know your enemy, know thyself, and you shall not fear a hundred battles.’ . Most probably, these are also told in this world.

I was granted with great luck, that I have met a person who know about Crusaders in an unexpected place, furthermore is my comrade.

I have a lot of things to ask, like the number of enemies, the equipment they use, morale, skill strength, their commander, and what are they thinking and trying to do.

“I’m really grateful that Fiona-san is our comrade, I’ll take your help from now on, take of care of me then.”

“Yes, thank you for accepting me.”

Fiona-san’s face is as usual unchanging but for some reason if had an expression of being relieved.

“I have a lot to ask you, but let’s think about the party name for now, it will be problematic when naming ourselves without it,”

“You’re right, let’s think a really good name together.”

I did gain the position of being the leader of adventurers due to the duel, but the one to lead them is not only me but the party I am in.

Now there are 3 people and there is also the need to introduce ourselves to adventurers, won’t it be difficult to name ourselves without a party name.

“Aw man, I have never even once thought about the party name.”

It would be a lie to say I never thought about it. During my high school days, I had to think about the names for organizations, agencies and squads in the Light Novels I used to write.

That this and that are different. I don’t want the name of my party with extravagant names with words like God... or Destruction... .

A party name should indicate about myself, should the name be indicating about my tall height.

“How do adventurers normally think about a party name?”

“Basically, everyone just thinks of what they like, let’s see, ah there are more cases of party names to be the exact names of the party leader.”

I see, Vulcan’s party name was also something like ‘Vulcan-powered’. [ET: Has author gone mad with naming sense and can’t write a normal design of story]

But that is only because he has more power than any other member in his party.

If we take the name of the strongest person in our party, we will turn into ‘Magical☆Lily’.

“There are also the cases of using the names of your birthplace, or class of members, characteristics, or even the name of legendary treasures.”

We are all from different places, furthermore my country can’t be found anywhere in this world. So we can’t even name ourselves like ‘Irz Bladers’ where all members were from the same place.

And I don’t know about the legends of this world as it is only a little over 1 year since I have come here, in addition to that I’m not even searching for some legendary treasure.

If i have to say, then I am searching for the summoning magic through which I can return to my own world, but right now I have no intention of searching it.

“Our common feature is, we all can use magic, right?”

“This really is an unreliable party without any vanguard.”

As a matter of fact you’re absolutely right. I make a wry smile and reply to her.

“I have only taken rank 1 quests, so it was good that I have not given more time to fighting in close combats.”

“But if I use my magic, I’m sure the vanguard will get engulfed inside it. Rather I think this is much better.”

Just how much does this girl doesn’t believe in controlling her power.

No, I won't return a tsukkomi to this, as it is something I was also worried about.

"now that I think about it Fiona-san is good at fire magic, right? You used the 'Ignis Rampart' to save me too."

"Ah, that was just an 'Ignis Shield'".

What is that answer, you trying to appeal as the best or something?

"That was a genuine 'Ignis Shield', when I use any lower-grade magic, it changes to that size."

Upon my question 'What will happen when you fire offensive magic', she replied calmly.

"In the case of 'Ignis Sagita', the range remains the same but it's destructive power changes to that of 'Ignis Fortis Sagita'".

I see this definitely explains the 'Enemy and ally will get burned to cinders'.

I wonder what will happen if this is shot in cave or dungeon.....

If she doesn't use it very carefully, it will turn into a big disaster.

But now I completely understand why Lily went through the trouble of letting her in our party.

The old Lily does think greatly, we can't leave a bomb roaming here and there. There might be big explosions in unexpected situations.

"I excel at using Fire magic, and can use every other magic till intermediate level except the light and dark magic."

She speaks in a boastful manner. I think that her fighting capabilities are great.

"Using 2 magic is not rare, but it's my first time seeing someone who can use every magic."

I can only use one damn black magic! Well complaining about myself is hurting me more. So I won't do it anymore.

"If you add my dark and Lily's white magic, we have all the types of magic."

My black magic is completely different from model magic, but it doesn't change the fact that I can manifest the dark magic with this too.

Bullet arts are only the materialization of objects but Dimensional space is also a skill of dark magic.

“There are not many parties with every magic attributes. If a single person acquires it alone he can be called as the legendary ‘Element Master’.”

“Element Master, huh. This is good and cool.”

If one uses all the attributes, then it is easy to know the weakness in the magicians and monsters with other attributes. And can also intercept the enemy’s attack with the attribute with high resistance.

Though it is magic centered, but aren’t we pretty strong party.

“Is controlling every attribute called as Elemental Master?”

“That’s what they are called. All the elemental masters can use all the higher grade color magic, and make many exploits due to which their names are recorded in history. They are one of the ideals every magician has.”

oo, isn’t it great title which suggests we can use every magic.

“Well then let’s call us that from now on.”

“I feel it is good. Lily-san will also agree to it.”

And thus the party name was decided.

“OK, from now on we are Element Masters.”

Chapter 79 - Scorched Earth Tactics

“I’m the leader of [Element Master], Kurono.”

I introduced myself as the leader to the 50 adventurers in the lobby along with my newly created party name.

It was not something like a powerful speech made by the American president in a Hollywood movie. All we did was confirm the details of the quest, introducing the members who will have the central role etc.

Though everyone was obediently listening to me for the time being, but all I have shown till now is only my power I used while beating Vulcan. It will still take some time before they trust me as a proper leader as well.

For a rank 1 adventurer with almost no experience like me, I had no other choice but to shown clear achievements from here onwards.

As I resolved this, it was now the next day – 21st of the month of Shinyou.

“But, to not even able ride a horse properly, are you even an adventurer?”

“Shut up Vulcan, I’m concentrating right now, don’t disturb me.”

As we departed towards Irz village early morning, I had already started to make others doubt my abilities as a leader.

The one I’m currently straddled to is probably the high class giant horse that was used by the commander of the force that attacked the Irz Village. This horse that had long sleek black hair like a girl was captured while repulsing the Crusaders.

At first it was going to be taken by someone else but since I became the leader, I also ended up getting it as well. It seems the leader is supposed to ride the best horse at the front of the force always.

Well that’s not all. It also seems to be a reward for me since I killed a lot Crusaders in Irz village.

I got a great horse but I was just a high school student in a literature club, half year as an experimental body and only three months as an adventurer. Just when the hell would I have had the time to learn something like horse-riding.

No, well I knew that horses were the best vehicle substitute in this world.

Even I wished to ride them one day but if you suddenly give me a horse and say 'Ride this and lead the adventurers in battle!', isn't it impossible?

Ah, by the way, Fiona-san splendidly climbed her horse and was smoothly running along the highway right now.

It seems she is a bit superior as an adventurer.....gununu.(T/N:Sound of getting irritated)

"Gahaha, try not to fall down hard, Mr. newbie leader-san!"

"Shit, damned Vulcan, should I use full burst on you one more time...."

Riding a Bicorn proportionate to his own giant size, Vulcan laughed loudly as he passed by.

By the way, a Bicorn is a subspecies of the famous Unicorn.

As the name suggests, it has two brilliant horns and looked more like a goat rather than a horse but was infact big enough to let even the 2m tall Vulcan ride on it easily.

"I would have practiced this earlier if I knew this would happen."

"Kuronon! Work Hard!"

"Thanks Lily, what would I do without you, seriously."

Lily sat in front of me. It looked like she was sitting there to not fall off suddenly but it was actually the reverse. Thanks to Lily being here, I am able to show some speed even on my first try riding a horse and am not falling suddenly.

Fairies really have a fantasy-like power that allows them to connect with animals by just touching.

Thanks to that brilliant ability, Lily is working hard to prevent me from falling off from the horse. I really am useless. I end up depending on Lily for everything. Crap, I feel like crying now.

"Are you crying?"

"I'm not. Dirt entered my eyes a little——"

“Ah, don’t release your hands!!”

“Oh crap!?!—”

Please, reach the destination quickly.

As I prayed, I enjoyed my first time riding a horse.

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Our destination currently is not Spada but the deserted Irz village.

As the representative of the 12 adventurers that came here, Vulcan came to ask me.

“We are too many for scouting but too few for making a defensive line. What’s the purpose behind us coming here?”

“Sorry for not explaining in advance since I was in a hurry. Well I wanted to explain en route but, you saw my sorry state. Really sorry.”

The adventurers laughed a bit but I ignored it and continued explaining.

“We came here to burn each and every store house and warehouses here in Irz Village.”(kurono)

“What?”

Maybe because my answer was unexpected or imprudent, everyone looked at me with cold gazes.

“You bastard, do you even realize what you’re saying? Isn’t this your village as well? How can you say something like that so easily?”

“I understand you will oppose this but this is a plan to stop and slow down the enemy, so I want you to understand.”

As I expected, the adventurers are well versed in killing monsters and survival skills, but they are not knowledgeable about proper Military tactics and strategies.

Even a person from peaceful Japan has knowledge about strategies, well that might be over exaggerating but, I still learnt a lot through various mediums like novels, documentaries, and fiction.

“This is called scorched earth tactics.”

“Scorched earth tactics?”

So they really haven’t even heard of it. They look at me with wondering gazes.

“Simply speaking, it’s a strategy to destroy any facility or food products that might be used and taken by the enemy before running away.”

“.....haa”

It seems this Vulcan can’t even use his head as expected. Other adventurers seemed to understand a bit from my short explanation.

“If the enemy finds large amounts of food stocked here, that means they’ll be able to eat well, that in turn means that they’ll be able to fight sooner. Understand?”(Kurono)

Since we are trying to hold them off, it’ll be troublesome for us if they can fight quickly.

“Oo, basically, we have no reason to gift the enemy with meals, right!?”(Vulcan)

“That’s right. If the enemy is unable to procure food locally, they’ll have to bring it from other places. That will further make their advance slower than normal. What’s important for us is to buy enough time to run away to Spada. This’ll help in achieving it without fighting them directly.”

“I understand the logic more or less.”

Vulcan made a face like he understood only half of it but continued,

“But is that fine? Will the villagers accept burning away all their food they had stocked till now?”(Vulcan)

“Vulcan, you actually were thinking about the villagers? You are good guy unlike what your face suggests.”(Kurono)

“Shaddup! So, what is it!?!”

I don't know whether he's embarrassed or actually angry but he approached me with a threatening look.

“Everyone won't agree with it, they'll definitely go against it. That's why I came back now when the evacuation of Kuar village is finished.”

“You're gonna deceive them?”

“I'll take the help of Village Head Nahad to somehow persuade the villagers later. Right now, it's more important to hold the Crusaders back as much as possible. After the evacuation to Spada is complete, I don't mind no matter how much they blame or condemn me. But till that time, I'll do whatever it takes to use the best plans and policies available. That's why I became the Leader. That's why, please, trust me during just this quest at least.”

If they don't accept me here, then I would have really failed.

I didn't show it on my face but I was anxious whether they would accept me with just these few words.

But, near my legs, Lily smiled and said ‘It's alright!’.

“Whatever. We decided that you're the leader. Noone's gonna complain now. But, if you fuck up even once, I'll change with you as the leader, don't forget that.”

Vulcan really is a good guy even with that face. I could only hear that as ‘I'll change with you even if you mess up, so don't worry’.

“Thanks. I'll give out simple instruction so hear me———”

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Just like how I came here on a horse, everyone else also came here while riding on something.

Just like how I didn't have a horse, not everyone had ways to travel fast.

In this different world that could be compared to the Middle Ages on Earth, the cost of horses wasn't very high but it was still not something anyone could easily get.

To have a personal horse was natural for only Rank 3 and above adventurers.

And the number of adventurers that came with me right now were 12 excluding me, Lily and Fiona-san.

Most had horses, but there were some that used monsters as mounts like the Bicorn used by Vulcan or the Giant Ghoul used by the Skeleton race Magician, etc.

By the way, a ghoul wasn't a zombie but was a hyena like monster of the Undead race.

Think of the mount used by this Skeleton-san as a giant zombie dog.

There are times where a party uses a carriage to travel but this time only the members of [Vulcan Powered] were using it.

Vulcan had a giant body so he chose to ride on his favourite Bicorn instead.

The reason I chose a horse rather than going by foot was, as I explained earlier, because we didn't have much time.

Since it's an army of only humans so one could calculate and estimate the time required to come here, but in the end it was just an estimate.

Raising the speed through magic, or transferring a unit itself, could also be possible.

As long as the opponent's tricks and hands were still unknown, it's better for us to be as fast as possible.

And thus, we needed to burn all the food here in Irz village before the Crusaders come here.

If possible I want to destroy the village head's house, the guild building and other big buildings as well.

Their troops had been deployed with the guild as a centre so it's confirmed that they were using it as the command centre.

Destroying useful buildings and burning food and grains was what Scorched Earth tactics is meant to be.

“Did Kurono-san go to a knight school or something?”

“No, I only went to a ‘normal’ school. I didn’t learn this properly. I’m just trying to make use of what an amateur like me knows about tactics. I’m actually doubtful of how much effect will it have.”

As I gave an explanation I continued to prepare burning the grains etc.

The only one who asked was Fiona-san, but it seems the rest were hearing as well.

“Also, this isn’t a perfect scorched earth tactic either this time. It might have no effect at all as well.”

“Is that so? Not having food is fatal in my opinion; I wouldn’t be able to bear it at all.”

Well it might be true for Fiona-san who quit her work because the food was bad.

“Normally, it would be perfect to burn away the fields, houses and even the nearby forests as well. Also, this tactic is the most effective in snowy, cold areas. If they lose food along with fuel to light fire, it could kill them there and then.”

“I see. I did hear things even in the Republic about abandoning invasion due to hard winters.”

Well, it’s common even in my world.

“We are low on time as well as manpower, so we can only pray that an incomplete one will also have some effect.”

As my final ‘parting gift’ I poured the final oil can on the grain storehouse.

With this, the preparations are complete. All that’s left is to put some fire on it and the whole warehouse will go up in flames.

When I was about to do that, Lily pulled my robe.

“n, what happened Lily?”

I thought she might want to say something against me burning the hardwork of villagers as well, but I saw unrest in those eyes of hers that had become serious.

“Oi Kurono, the enemy is coming here!”

The one who shouted that was an Elf girl with a bow who was a member of the [Three hunting Princesses] that had been keeping watch of the surroundings.

She looked like a young girl, but she was a rank 3 veteran adventurer.

The girl stopped her horse in front of me and quickly explained the situation.

“Susan discovered 7 cavalry warriors coming here from the highway.”

Susan was a solo rank 4 thief.

She looked like a human but was actually of the slime race. I had asked her, who was quick witted to keep watch and it seems she has already discovered enemies.

“Only 7? Not more than that?”(kurono)

“They are the only ones running on the highway.”(Elf)

It must be scouting unit.

“They must have come to check this place since their squad got repelled here.”(kurono)

The enemy is an army of humans. They won't go through the trouble of making a large number of troops to avoid the highway and go through the forest to launch a surprise attack.

They have the superiority of numbers, so I doubt they'll decide not to launch a frontal attack.

“What shall we do?”(elf)

I didn't even need to think before answering.

“Attack them. Don't let even a single one get away alive.”(kurono)

“Roger! That’s how we like it!!”

The Elf girl showed a determined smile and left to tell others to get ready for battle.



Chapter 80 - Scout Troop

About 2 Km away from Irz village, the scout troop dispatched by Norz's main troop was stationed.

"How is it?"

"It doesn't look like there are people in the village."

The members of the scout troop stopped their magic [Hawk Eye] meant to look at distant things.

"I see. It seems all the villagers have run away."

"Should we chase?"

"If they were still in sight then we could have. But they must have evacuated to the nearby village called Kuar. We won't make it in time now."

The soldier agreed with the commanding officer's words. The two weren't surprised since they were already expecting it to be like this.

"Alright, let's search if there's someone still in the village, just in case. It'll be dark soon, we'll scout Kuar tomorrow so let's make a camp in Irz tonight."

All the soldiers agreed.

"They seem to have run away in a hurry so we might find some silver coins as well but, don't stay up all night just to 'look for treasure'."

"That sounds like a difficult order."

Hahaha, the two of them laughed lightly.

They weren't soldiers who received high wages so they could only gather 'bonuses' like this on-site locally.

"It's too bad we have no women even if we have money."

"Don't worry. A brothel will be set up sooner or later. Daedalus already has one with 'local women'. Seriously, those merchants are damn quick."

Though that's good for us, he gave a twisted smile as he thought so.

“I don’t want demons as partners though.”

“I won’t mind if it’s just elf women, at least ——“

The commander looked behind him with a fed up face.

“Oi, Tsumiki ~ Tsumiki-chan ~ where did you go!?”

A single woman was shouting while moving between the soldiers.

“—they’ll be better than stupid adventurers like that.”

“What’s up with that woman?”

The soldier asked with a bored face.

“Like I know. That Sylvia nee-chan authorised her accompanying us so we can’t complain either.”

While choosing the members for scouting, this adventurer girl was added suddenly as if on a whim.

It was suspicious no matter how you think about it but they couldn’t do anything since it was an official order.

“In the first place isn’t it weird to hire ‘them’ even though we have enough numbers?”

It wasn’t rare to hire mercenaries inside the Syncrea Republic for campaigns. But that was only in cases where they lacked men to deploy.

The force deployed by Cardinal Mercedes under Norz had no problem regarding the number of soldiers.

But still, to have hired such mercenaries even then was unnatural no matter how you looked at it.

Even their equipment was different from the united Crusader equipment which made them stand out even more. Though, their existence wasn’t something that required being hidden.

But still, the objective behind hiring them was still unclear.

“I don’t know what the top brass is thinking but they didn’t ask us to treat them specially either, so it’s best to leave them alone.”

He wondered whether the adventurers hired had been given a special secret mission or not.

The ones with him looked all commonplace, especially that girl who kept shouting 'Tsumiki, tsumiki' didn't feel like an adventurer at all.

"Well, as long as they don't interfere with the mission, I don't really care."

Praying to god that the girl who was just a baggage for them doesn't cause any problems, the commanding officer continued the mission.

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The mysterious adventurer girl walked through the main street of Irz village alongside the commanding officer in the front.

The Crusaders could only think of her as a clumsy, dunce, newbie adventurer.

She was the lowest level among the adventurers but it seems that she still had the ability to at least ride a horse properly though.

"Ojou-chan, is that the tsumiki you were talking about?"

In front of them was a small cat with black fur. The silver collar around its neck showed that it was not a stray but a pet.

"Yes, cute right!?"

With a somewhat proud smile, she lifted [Tsumiki] with the nape of its neck and brought it in front of the commander.

As it's golden eyes met with the commander's, it gave a small nyaa cry.

"Also my name is Ai, remember it!"

"It's such a common name."

"Don't say that..."

[Ai] puffed her cheeks in protest but it was the truth. It really was a common name in the republic.

“Rather than that, don’t let that cat run away next time.”

“ahhahha, I’ll make sure!”

The commander’s sigh was drowned by the girl’s laughter.

(“Isn’t she really just a normal brat?”)

He looked at the girl with bored eyes.

She had a cute face with blue eyes and long golden hair tied up in a twintails hairstyle. Although, it really failed in practicality as an adventurer.

A magician would have been fine with long hair since he/she had the excuse of possessing magic, but she was an archer no matter how you looked at it. Her main weapon was a long bow made out of worn out wood.

The only type of protective armor she had was the leather breastplate, gloves and boots. Her upper body just had a thin shirt and her lower body had a miniskirt for some reason.

The silver bracelet on her right hand was the only thing that looked useful. But even that was a silver accessory of the lowest quality that was giving off a weak light representing some kind of enhancement.

Rather an adventurer, she looked more like some town girl who decided to dress up as an adventurer. If she didn’t have her slender and small yet well toned body, she really would not have looked like an adventurer at all.

(“What were the upper guys thinking letting her participate in the campaign?”)

As if to ridicule the commander who was thinking, the cat cried nyaa nyaa towards him.

“Why the hell is it a cat? Isn’t the partner of a hunter with a bow supposed to be a dog?”

“Eh, but cats are cuter!”

(“This girl is nuts. She brought an animal to keep as a pet.”)

As he had said, a dog would have been much more useful.

A cat which didn't listen to the orders of its master was useless. In fact it was worse if it went missing in between.

"If we end up in a fight, look carefully after it."

"Leave it to me old man!!"

"I'm not an old man yet—"

That instant, the commander's head burst open.

"Wha?"

Ai stared at the figure of the commander falling down from his horse with a hole in his head.

"Enemy attack! Be careful, it's an ambush!!"

The soldier behind Ai shouted in a loud voice.

At the same time, demons wielding weapons appeared from the shadows and rushed in towards the main street.

Beastmen, demi-humans and humans swung their swords and attacked the soldiers.

They instantly understood that the enemy were demons, that too skilled adventurers.

"Wa Waa! A lot of them came!?"

In panic, Ai ended up stretching the reins of the horse, and she fell down as the horse struggled.

"Ugiya!! It hurts ~ I hit my head ~"

In front of the tearful Ai, a battle filled with blood sprays had started already.

"Shit, there are too many! Don't get divided Maintain formation——"

Ai saw as the soldier, who had take command, had his head blow off.

“Oh my ~ this looks dangerous, should we run away while showing our backs Tsumiki? Wait Tsumiki!! Don’t run away alone without your master!!!”

Wait ~ while shouting, Ai slipped through the soldiers in battle while chasing the black cat.



Chapter 81 - Adventurers Vs. Scout Troop (1)

Lying face-down on the roof of the guild, we waited for the enemy to enter the village.

They are 7, and we have more adventurers and all are above rank 3 as well.

Our forces include my party [Element Master] that includes a black magician, fairy and a witch, all 3 magicians.

[Vulcan Powered] having 3 warriors led by Vulcan, 1 archer, and 1 magician. All belong to beastmen race and it is a rank 4 party.

[Three hunting Princesses] having 3 elf girls, all archers, and they were sisters on top of that. Rank 3.

Other than them, there were 2 solo Orc warriors, 1 skeleton magician, and 1 slime.

Total 15 people.

The specific details about the enemies abilities was unknown but if it's a normal scouting troop, at most they will be as strong as a rank 3 party.

If we deal the surprise attack well, we should be able to annihilate them all without any victims on our side.

We are only cooperating temporarily so it would be difficult to show any proper teamwork but, if we have numbers, ability, as well as the preemptive strike like this time, there's a low chance for us to lose.

All the adventurers are already in position and are waiting for the enemy to come.

"I hope everything goes well." (kurono)

"Everyone's working hard! It'll be alright!" (lily)

This time I am acting as the rear guard. After all there are lots of warriors to fight as the vanguard, so I'll stick to the normal theory and provide covering fire from behind as a proper magician should.

Well in truth I feel more like a sniper rather than a rear guard. And Lily beside me is my observation supporter.

In Hollywood movies Snipers seem to work well alone, but normally, a sniper always works with a supporter as a combo.

“Yeah, we should also work hard and make the plan a success.”(kurono)

I focused myself. If we can easily finish off the scout troop here then the trust in me will also increase.

In the first place, the term sniper doesn't exist in this world. They would only think of a hunter waiting to ambush a monster even if I tried explaining them. So when I took a position faraway from the actual battlefield, they started giving me weird suspicious looks.

But rather than explaining with words, it'll be faster to explain the usefulness of a sniper with actions here.

I could see that these Crusaders were of a lower class, that is, they don't have any means to deflect sniper attacks. So basically, I could start with shooting the most influential person first.

And with the accuracy of my magic bullet arts, I could snipe with the same efficiency as that of an actual sniper rifle even in this world, probably, well it's my first time doing this so I can't say for sure.

And, Lily also has convenient support Extra magic that I could use.

One of them is the glass-like transparent light ball that is floating in front of me.

Through it I can see faraway things magnified. It's basically like a scope.

Even if my eyesight is over 2.0 through the modifications, that still doesn't mean that I don't need a scope for help.

For me who has not learned the magic [Hawk Eye] to enhance eyesight, such a support is really helpful.

Also, the rest of the duties of a supporter like keeping a watch over the surroundings and even eliminating enemies that have come very close, I have left it all to Lily.

Other than this scope, we can also talk through telepathy and with its further application, I can also see things that Lily sees in real time.

In the worst case, even if the enemy approaches from behind, Lily can eliminate him by firing her lasers like a sub-machine gun.

“.....Maybe I should have sent Lily to the front?”

No use thinking that now though.

I changed my thoughts and focused towards the approaching enemy troop.

“They’re here.”

As expected, the enemy scout troop is approaching directly from the north-west highway and enters the village from the destroyed gate.

AS reported by Su-san, their number is 7.

They were clearly Crusaders identifiable with their white surcoats but only 6 of them were wearing those clothes.

“Hm, there’s one that looks different.”

It was girl with blonde twintails. I could only think of her as a normal girl. She does have a breastplate and a bow so she should be a mercenary hired by the Crusaders.

She was walking alongside the person who looked like the commander of the troops, so she shouldn’t be a prisoner from Daedalus.

I’m a bit curious but I can’t change the plans now, nor do I feel the need to.

As planned, I’ll have them all die here.

“Operation start.”

.

.

.

(POV change to 3rd person)

Kurono fired the magic bullet made for long range sniping towards the head of the leading commander.

He had heard from Fiona that the commander must be skilled in both magic and martial arts even if he was a low class soldier but, he had no way to defend against Kurono's unforeseen snipe attack.

The black bullet, having strength equal to that of an actual sniper rifle bullet, clearly shot through the head of the commander.

That became the signal to other adventurers to start the operation.

"Let's do this you guys!! Don't let even a single one get out of here alive!!"

Vulcan shouted as he cut through the vanguard with his long sword.

"Enemy attack! Be careful, it's an ambush!!"

They lost their commander but they were all experienced soldiers. They had been surprised by the ambush but soon they got down from their horses and took battle positions.

They could have stayed and the horses and broken through if their opponent were humans or thieves who used brute force but,

"[Death Wall Defence.]"

The front of the street was sealed by the Skeleton magician and,

"Terra Shield."

The rear was blocked by Fiona.

Having been sealed from both sides, the soldiers had no choice but to fight here.

Neither the intermediate dark type magic [Death wall defence], that Kurono saw for the first time, nor the giant [terra shield], that had been enhanced one level by Fiona's magic, could be broken through easily.

The soldiers decided that it would be difficult destroy either of these walls and resolved to face the ambushers here instead.

("These bastards, they are much more trained than those cowards that first attacked Irz")

Vulcan secretly admired these soldiers in his heart that had quickly taken fighting stances without getting too surprised by the ambush.

He felt that they wouldn't go down easily, but that still didn't change their fate of being annihilated here.

("But, what the hell is that brat?")

In his view was a girl who had neither taken up her weapon nor had come down from her horse.

"Wa Waa! A lot of them came!?"

In panic, she ended up stretching the reins of the horse too much, and she fell down as the horse struggled.

"Ugiya!! It hurts ~ I hit my head ~"

Not even a rank 1 adventurer would show such a pathetic sight.

("For the time being, let's take that brat as a prisoner.")

Vulcan thought, and all others had the same opinion as well.

Kurono had said to kill them all, but that didn't mean to kill them all in battle. They could kill them after getting info as well.

These adventurers who lived on the battlefield understood Kurono's words instantly, but from a normal point of view, Kurono who had shown the intent to kill even prisoners could not be said to be a 'normal high schooler' anymore.

Whether he himself had realized that or not, Kurono was currently taking the next move as an adventurer. i.e. he aimed his magic bullet towards the next enemy.

"You bastard, you look the strongest, become my opponent." (Vulcan)

"Shit, don't underestimate me you inferior demon!!"

Vulcan found the strongest soldier among the remaining 5 excluding the girl and the fallen commander, and attacked him savagely.

Vulcan swung his giant sword and the soldier used [Force boost] to face this big framed beast.

“SLASH!!!”

The werewolf adventurer and the human soldier. The martial art skill released by both of them was the same.

But, just as there is difference in power of magic depending on the caster, there is also a difference in martial art depending on the user.

“Hahaa! You did well in enduring atleast 1 move, not bad!!”

The result was Vulcan’s absolute victory. Unable to hold against him for even 1 second, the soldier was blown away a few meters and fell down on the ground.

Even with the [Force boost] a human could not match with a werewolf in power, that too Vulcan who was exceptionally strong. The difference in power could not be diminished at all.

The favourite long sword of the rank 4 Vulcan, that had costed him the most money and labour, was also in a different league as a weapon.

The soldier truly did deserve the praise to have endured even a single attack.

“You damned monster——”

“Stand up already. You aren’t gonna give up now, right?”

Shouldering his giant sword, Vulcan calmly walked towards the soldier. Even in this situation where killing the opponent quickly was the goal, he prioritized crossing swords with a strong guy for a little while longer.

He had a bad habit of ignoring his objective but his party knew that and properly supported accordingly. That is why he was able to ‘enjoy fights’.

“That calmness will be your end! — بـ يرس ال سهم رعد [Lightning arrow – Rain Sagita!!]”

“Oh!?”

The soldier quickly ended his chant and fired attack magic towards Vulcan.

But even if the chanting was short, it still took more than a second. And that time was enough for a rank 4 adventurer to deflect a lower level magic.

“What, so you could use magic too? Hehe, a jack of all trades eh?”(Vulcan)

Vulcan defended against the lightning by using his giant sword as a shield.

“I told you that your calmness will bring your end!!”

The soldier, who had already stood up, threw the item in his hand.

Vulcan quickly realized what that red stone flying towards him was.

“Diee!! [Ignis Overblast]!!!”

The moment the soldier shouted, flames exploded.

The flames spread out and enveloped Vulcan’s body and a shock wave and smoke spread all over.

Intermediate level ranged magic [Ignis Overblast] was not a magic a member of the scout troop would have learnt, no matter how trained they are. Because if he actually did, then he’ll be a magician and not a soldier.

What he threw was neither a stone nor a grenade. It was a magic item that could release [Ignis Overblast] once.

Such single-use items were not rare but they were not cheap enough to be collected easily either. Using them also required some skill and a bit of magical energy.

This magic item was kept by the soldier as a personal protective charm and was not something provided to the soldiers.

Anyway, Vulcan had quickly realized that the magic item was an attack magic based item.

But, knowing it, and defending against it are two different things.

The soldier was aware of his inferiority in physical strength but was also aware that he could defeat him with his trump card magic item. Fortunately for him, Vulcan was not wearing any heavy armour either.

If Vulcan had been covered in steel, it would have become difficult to deal a fatal blow. And if he had a defensive magic then the chances would be even lower.

But, Vulcan who was wearing only clothes and a chestplate, it would be impossible for him to stop the flames and heat.

“With this, it’s over damned monster

The soldier took a step with his sword that had cracked from the previous blow.

He didn’t think that the magic was enough to kill a demon that had high vitality but it would be enough to take away his ability to fight back at least.

But unfortunately, he didn’t know how Vulcan had made as far as becoming a rank 4 adventurer.

“You have some pretty cool things, but, is that it?”

From within the flames, Vulcan walked out while shouldering his giant sword as usual.

His clothes and armour had some soot, but his body was completely unhurt.

“Wh,Why.....no way, healing magic!?!”

“Half-correct. But that’s not the only secret.”

The extra magic possessed by Vulcan, Auto-heal, had attained him the title of [Immortal].

But, right now, the flames and heat were not stopped by his regenerating power.

“Kooooooooo——“

It was the giant sword that ‘ate’ magical energy with a ominous cry.

Although he called it a [secret] but any adventurer with some experience would know what it was.

At least, if they knew that this white board like giant sword was not made of metal but was actually the fang of a monster, they would understand that it was the ability of the monster that dwelt in the weapon.

The inscription on the sword was [Fang sword Evil eater/Gluttony], the raw material used was from the monster called [Gluttony magic beast – Chaos

Eater]. A young one would be rank 4 and a fully grown one would be a rank 5 monster. It was magic beast that could match a dragon.

[Chaos Eater] was as its name suggested, a glutton. Its Extra magic allowed it to 'eat' magical energy of any form and absorb it.

Basically, it was impossible to defeat it with attack magic and could not be blocked by defensive magic. If one was careless, it would even devour healing magic as well.

To kill it, one needed to use only magics to boost and enhance their own abilities and attack directly with physical force.

The ways to attack were limited to only pure physical strength, that's why it was classified as a rank 5.

Vulcan's giant sword was a magic weapon made out of the fang of this monster and it could almost negate the effect of even intermediate magic with a single swing.

Having such a powerful weapon along with his own physical strength was what allowed him to become a rank 4 adventurer.

"It's troublesome so I'm not gonna explain it, so think about it carefully in the other world."

And thus, with the agility of a werewolf, he rushed in and split the soldier in two with a single slash.

Chapter 82 - Adventurer vs Scout Troop (2)

The scout troop fought well against against adventurers of rank 3 and more.

“Damn, Don’t get seperated, stay close—”

The heads of the commander and the commanding soldier were blasted into bits with Kurono’s sniping, but the soldiers still made frantic efforts to fight.

“Aa, This won’t last more than 3 mins”

Adventurer Ai catches a glimpse of such soldiers running.

Ai runs after her pet cat that had run away.

“Goaaaa!”

“Hooo!”

A Orc attacks Ai, but she evades it at hair’s breadth.

“VaAAA!”

“Slow!”

This time another orc attacks with a battle axe, but she evades by sliding beneath it.

The two orc didn’t chase after the running away Ai, and changed their targets to soldiers fighting near them.

“It was dangerous, wasn’t it? Aw, my hair ends got cut.”

The bloody feud unfolds at the main street. Ai somehow or another with goodluck dodges all the offensive magics and stray arrows, while steadily moving forward.

“All right, Just a little more.”

Some dozen of metres away, is the solid wall made by Fiona using ‘Tera Shield.’

The wall made by the natural airhead seemed like a stone wall, but it is impossible to jump over it, furthermore the horses can’t jump that high. Even if it’s Ai who is makes mistakes in missions and always falls from, but as long as she is an adventurer rock climbing is not a big deal for her.

Ai in front of the two-storied big wall, challenges it with enthusiasm as if saying ‘I will climb if there is a wall here.’

“Hey you, why are you trying to run?”

But immediately after, from her back comes a voice with bloodlust.

“.....Shit”

Ai timidly turns back to look, there were 3 elves standing.

There were Elf girls standing there, with blond hair, blue eyes, narrow and long ears and also toned slender body.

Ai witnesses one of the girl shooting arrow in the heads of soldier and killing them. Their outwards appearance are completely different from inner contents.

“Aww, that soldier didn’t even last 1 minute.”

Upon those words Ai recalls the figure of the soldier desperately defending himself using magic from the trio’s attacks some seconds ago.

“Isn’t it bad, just get caught without resistance, we don’t want to do tiresome work.”

The two not killing the soldiers, fix an arrow made of lighting on the bow string and ask for Ai to surrender.

“Erm, If I get caught without resistance, will you guarantee my safety.”

“Haa? If you’re also an adventurer you must know what happens to the monsters captured alive, don’t you?”

“Just like I thought.”

Ai made a wry smile while cold sweat pours from her forehead.

“Well, we can’t leave Tsukimi-chan here, so I won’t give up and run away from here!!”

The two elves shoot the lightning arrows seeing Ai move.

The same time the arrows are fired, a round ball like object fires from the hands of Ai.

Along with the balls flying away, AI bends down in a grovelling position and the arrows go past above her head burning the ends of her twin tails.

The two elves run away from their places, while being vigilant towards the mysterious ball flying in the sky making a parabola.

In an instant the ball emits dazzling light and bursts.

“Flash, huh?!”

Though the elves see through the true form of the ball, but they couldn't do anything other than closing their eyes and protect with their hands in that much time.

The dazzling light can even be felt even behind the closed eyelids, if one were to look at it with open eyes, they would go blind without a doubt. Thanks to closing the eyes, they didn't suffer any damage, but it still will take some time for their eyes to recover.

"Tsk, now I don't care even if she dies! 'Air Blast'"

The two elves having lost eyesight for the time being stay vigilant for sudden attacks, and now they attack instead of taking Ai as a prisoner. The primary magic they excel at involves both wind and lighting, if it is concentrated on their bow 'Sylph Light' and fired, it becomes a low grade offensive magic.

It can be used as a arrow, but to be precise it is a cane in the form of arrow. The 'Air Blast' shot by the two advances forward covering a wide range with wind blades surrounding.

The invisible blades with great cutting sharpness, leave countless cuts on the stone wall on the ground.

「الان تعاش ت تبع」—Lesser Heal

Just as the the wind blades advance forward, the third elf who was beating the soldiers, starts a healing magic and the eyesight of the two returns.

"You really saved me there, nee-san"

"Thank you!"

After giving their gratitudes, they once again see their prey, Ai.

"No way, healing is too fast?!"

Ai somehow dodges the range of the Air blast by climbing on the wall, but the the point she is clinging like a frog is in the middle of the wall.

From this positions she can neither defend or attack, of course she can't even climb the wall before the second wave of attacks come.

As Ai looks back, she sees the figure of 3 elves with arrows nocked and are going to shoot.

If one person was hitting, she might have been able to evade, but with three shooting at the same time, she will definitely get hit by at least one arrow no matter what she tries.

Furthermore, the three are rank 3 adventurers, they can't miss their target at this range.

"It's not time to be stingy about using items. Take THIS!!"

Along with a scream, Ai once again releases something.

Before she is hit and her fate is fixed the effect of item activates.

Along with a plop sound, the item bursts and a dark green smoke spreads out.

"So it's poison this time!?"

"Wouldn't I be also engulfed in it idiot, this is just a smokescreen."

The dark and dense green smoke spreads and hides Ai inside it.

"There's no other choice but to scatter this"

Once again the three nock bows and pull string to their extent.

"Air Blast"

Two use the same magic as before, but this time to scatter away the smokescreen.

With a sudden gust of wind and Ale blast the smokescreen disappears.

"Lightning Arrow – Line Sagita"

And the other one fires a lightning arrow filled with bloodlust.

The Line Sagita flies through while leaving a trail of blue color just like the laser beam, but

"Whoa, close call!?"

Again Ai dodges at hair's breadth by climbing to the top of the wall and jumping down quickly from it.

"Ju-Just how much good is she at escaping....."

One elf says as such ,though it was dangerous, but she escaped without even a single injury.

"Well there is still one more person outside."

"Aa, was it Fiona?"

"If I remember correctly she is rank 1 adventurer, but she could use this great defense magic, wouldn't she be fine?"

The three decide not to go to other side of wall to attack and decide to take on soldiers as their prey has run away, but just as they look behind,
“Uaaa! Please wait, save m—”

The last soldier was cut in two halves by a beast man, and the battle was over.

“Over already?”

◦
◦
◦

“If you move 100 metres from the gate, I’ll shoot.”

While mumbling that, Fiona in complete black witch clothes, moves towards the the shadow that fell down in front of the main gate..

Just some seconds a girl carrying a cat came rushing through the gate shouting ‘Finally, the Escape Quest Completed!!’

Fiona saw a glimpse of her climbing the stairs while waving her twin tails like a tail of horse.

“Well then Kurono-san, now that I have an opportunity, I will show you my attack magic.”

This line was definitely not heard by Kurono who was standing on the rooftop of the Guild, but he will be able to see her ‘intermediate level’-like attack magic for sure.

«بـ يرس سد بـ يرز الـ شـعلة عصا مـ تقدة نار ثـ لا ثـاء»

From her small mouth came the chant of a normal model magic, with no change whatsoever, just as it is written in the school magic books.

Her magic power concentrates in her staff ‘Ainz Broom’ and it amplifies the firepower of the magic being used.

Without stopping from speaking the chant, she completes her chant in 15 seconds.

The magic she was about to release is the intermediate level attack magic of fire attribute ‘Ignis Kris Sagita’

It is written in characters of spears and people in line, if many magicians release it, it will create the same scene as it’s name suggests a line full of

spears. And if activated from the ground, it will create a bristling hot pillar of fire.

If a magician hears Fiona's chant, he/she will conclude it is a magic that will blow away the target.

But the one who sees her magic for first time will have their conclusion betrayed,

"Ignis Kris Sagita"

Because the thing Fiona made is not pillar but a giant tower of fire with scorching heat.

DoGoGoGoGoGooooOO!!

"Whoa! What is it?"

"!?"

Kurono and Lily on the the rooftop,

"What is it!?"

"What the hell is that!?"

"What the friggin hell is that!?"

"What the fucking friggin hell is that"[ET: the last some line were all the same if TL'ed in English, So I added a little more fun to it.]

The adventurers on the main street,

"—How is it Kurono-san, my magic, did you like it?"(fiona)

Along with the explosion sounds, appeared a flame tower with scorching heat, the people saw it and were astonished.

Just after some seconds the Ignis Kris Sagita loses its magical power and disappears.

After the tower disappeared, only the black ground was there, no one could say that something else was present at that place some time before.

Chapter 83 – Safe Return

“.....And so, only you came back escaping from them.”

“Um, one person and one animal.”

Ai was standing in front of commander Norz and his aide Sylvia in a room within the headquarters.

“You Fool! It doesn’t change anything!!”

Norz became enraged at her coming back with her cat only alive and not showing even a bit of timidity in her replies.

“Please calm down”

Just before 5 seconds Norz would have hit her, Sylvia whisper in her ears in a cold voice.

“She is most probably one that Cardinal likes, if you raise hand on her do you think you’ll be forgiven?”

“Gu.....But still this”

“We don’t have any time to deal with her, shouldn’t we make plans for interception.”

“Tsk, Got no choice”

Norz somehow calms down his rage and closes his eyes while folding his arms, as if he doesn’t care whatever the adventurer says now.

“Adventurer Ai, Thank you for your hard work, you can go now.”

“Ye~s”

After giving an idiotic reply, Ai along with Tsumiki left the room. [ET: Tsumiki is her cat.]

“.....However, finally we can fight a battle which doesn’t feel like massacre.”

Inside Norz words there were some hidden expectations.

He wasn’t as good as Kievan but he was also a genuine believer of Cross, and hated the demons from the very bottom of his heart. In spite of that, the reason he went to occupy villages without more soldier was because his aide, Sylvia was holding his reins due to which he couldn’t go on a rampage and Sylvia also negotiated like an expert with the villages to surrender.

Though the ability of Sylvia capturing villages without any resistance is something of very much value, but to Norz who was enthusiastic ‘I will kill

all the demons. It will be a bloodbath.', the 'peaceful' actions were somewhat unsatisfying for him.

"The overdoing of Priest Kievan, must have put in the seeds of rebellion in the demons."

They have already heard from the soldiers that escaped about the crucifixion as an example of the Cross.

If they had easily occupied Irz Village like that, it might have served as a purpose for fear, but his actions in turn aroused the hate and seeds of rebellion in the other villages.

"Fun, the enemies are just some lousy adventurers, whether they are demons or something else, we can send out hundred thousand soldiers if we want. But naturally, it won't be needed as our squad already has a lot of soldiers to complete this job."

Judging from the scale of village, even if all the villagers were to arm up and come at them, they won't be a match for Norz Squad.

Naturally, it is not like even women and children would come in fight, if they join hands with those who can properly file like vigilante corps or adventurers, they still won't make more than 300.

Unless a dragon or something appears, Norz squad will not be defeated. Therefore, Sylvia was also not worried about this, but rather she was worried about the other matter.

"There is nowhere they can now run to inside Daedalus territory. I will slowly drive them in corner while they feel regret along with the demons who opposed the god."

".....No, there is a place to escape."

"What did you say?"

Sylvia's long and slender finger runs over the western part of Daedalus's map that was spread on the table.

"There is no problem for us if they move along the south-west highway using from Kuar Village.

But if they, ran towards the west using the north-west, then they would..."

Beyond the line named as Galahad Mountain Range, there was a country name 'Spada' written.

“Impossible, I have heard that they are an enemy nation.”

“If they had somehow known that Daedalus has been defeated, the villagers will perceive the end of their country. I think it would be the most logical answer that they would run to Spada as refugees.”

“Fumu, there is a possibility of this information somehow being leaked.....”
Norz frowned his eyebrows and groaned.

“When we conquer the village they will just become newcomer of the new village. There will be no problem in leaving some combatants demons on their own.”

Even if it will be a little, if demons will start a rebellion, crusaders side will have to suffer some casualties.

Judging from the whole war potential of Crusaders those casualties might not be much, but there is no harm in avoiding it.

“No, it is not good.”

But Norz rejects Sylvia’s suggestion of no fighting.

“I can not accept this even if this is you proposal Sister Sylvia.”

“.....I see, well the commander are you do as you like, I don’t want to meddle with you.”

Sylvia refrained herself from speaking anymore useless talk to Norz who seemed to be determined.

“I’m really happy that you understand Sister Sylvia. Now let me give out my orders, don’t let a single running demon live, just massacre them all, you got it?”

Norz eyes while speaking that were the same as the Kievan who was also a religious fanatic.

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After completing her reporting job, Ai returned to the campsite where her party, no, mercenary group friends were sleeping.

The occupation forces, take the tallest buildings like that of head of village or adventurer guild and turn them into headquarters, and confiscated all the buildings in it’s surroundings.

However the adventurers and mercenaries who were not a part of army, have been given the permission to reside anywhere which won't become a hindrance to the forces.

It is normal for adventurers who were temporarily hired and soldiers to be on bad terms with each other. If things went down wrong, it will make troubles such as battles, and so it was not unusual for them both to camp at different places.

The group Ai belonged to is 'Cyprus Mercenary Group', the prime example of those aforementioned circumstances.

Their campsite was a little away from the village, with a building of a farmer as their centre.

Ai heads towards her tent, while giving greetings to fellow mercenaries.

Just when she put down Tsumiki and was about to enter the tent to sleep.

"Yoo, If you have returned, come to my place at least once."

Upon the voice of a man from behind, Ai turned backwards with a frankly irritated expression on her face.

His age is somewhat older than Ai, and is a good looking man with a good body stature. But his indecent grin and the clothes worn by him in a shabby manner could be said as the figure of a nasty brat who got a growth spurt.

"Can you not talk to me? And don't you dare come any more close than that."

Without caring about Ai's cold reply, he closes his distance more while fluttering his long hair.

"OiOi, I doubt that is a way to talk to a captain, isn't it? Aren't we buddies, we should be more happy with being with each other."

Just like the man said, he is the leader of the 87 mercenaries present here.

His name is Cyprus. The mercenary name was after all set after his name.

"Don't speak disgusting things, and if you move just one more step, the name will change from Cyprus Mercenary Group to Ai Mercenary Group."

Ai took out knife before anyone knew and, thrust the blunt side in Cyprus's stomach.

"I am really tired today, after all I escaped by barely saving my life today. If it wasn't for the me being of great class, I would've died, you know?"

More than halfway may sound like joke, but Ai's eyes were serious when saying that.

"oho, you saying the truth?"

He replies a joke with a joke, but Ai inferred it through his atmosphere that he was more interested in knowing if there really was a battle or not.

"Un, and from now on it will get busy, so get ready fast for departure too."

Saying that, Ai put knife back and entered her tent.

Cyprus stood there, and did not chase after Ai as if he didn't care about her for the time being and suddenly he laughed.

"I will be finally able to do some 'decent' job. I have already got bored of playing with the demon sluts, this is a good timing, no, if said in his words, this might be the so-called 'fate'—pfft, I really am loved by God!"

Chapter 84 - Amity

The destruction of the valuable facilities of Irz went better than I expected.

I thought I could only burn the drain storehouses at most but with the help of Fiona's terrific magic, we were able to destroy the sturdy guild completely and even turned the whole central area of the village into bare land.

And currently, the adventurers on standby had gathered together under the pretence of reporting the fruits of battle and were currently drinking sake together.

Is this fine during such an emergency? Is what everyone might think but we will be the last to leave the village as the rear guard and there were things remaining after the evacuation, so we decided to drink and eat as much as we please.

It could be that this would be our Last Supper, every adventurer here thought that but nobody said that out loud.

"Well weren't you fine? When you said that you will be going to the guild rooftop, I thought you wussed out at the last second zehahaha!!"

Vulcan's giant palm normally hurt as he patted my back but since he had the pawpads unique to the beastmen, the effect was much reduced.

"Didn't I explain it properly? I fulfilled my role as was required."

"I clearly saw boss blowin up the enemies heads with a single shot as well!"
(T/N: Mr.skeleton speaks in Kansai dialect which is untranslatable in eng.)

The one who spoke in this fake kansai dialect was the skeleton magician Mozrun, aka Mossan.(T/N: the nickname is a fusion of his name and ossan which means old man cuz he's a skeleton. Get it?)

He is the one that used [Death Wall Defence] to block off the enemies today.

With his shinigami-like looks and the straight [Dark Wizard] class on his guild card gave me a an impression of being an avatar of evil but,

"Nah, to have such control over black magic at such a young age, you're a damn genius! It'll be child's play to repel that whatever army! Gahahaha!!"

Inside he was just like an old man from Osaka.

When I tried talking he turned out to be an energetic good guy(?) like this.

“Child’s play would be over exaggerating but Kurono-san is dependable as a leader, and he also possesses a strong Original magic as well.”

The one who calmly said that was the slime, Su-san. (T/N: I translated her as Susan before but it was actually Su-san. My apologies) No matter how I look at her, isn’t she a human? She looked like a normal woman with a medium build after all.

In RPGs slime are jelly like creatures, but they can apparently, sometimes change the shape of their bodies when they get stronger. By the way, to change into a handsome man/beautiful woman requires the appropriate technique as well as more magical energy it seems.

Beautiful things possessed the charm attribute in this world, so being beautiful also possessed a different meaning in terms of magic as well.

Also, I just learnt this now but her name was [Susu] thus she was called as Su-san. It was not Su-san from slime(Suraimu in jap), definitely not!

“But, the most surprising was definitely Fiona-san’s magic, right?”

“Really?”(Fiona)

“ee, really.”

The one talking to the Fiona, who had her usual sleepy eyes, was an elf woman with a gentle smile. She was the leader of [Three Hunting Princesses] and the eldest of the three sisters, Irina-san.

All three of them had blonde hair, blue eyes, slender physique as well as their weapons were the same but, all three had different hairstyle, so they could be easily differentiated.

Irina-san has a hairstyle in which she has a long braid behind her neck.

“That extreme magic, if we were closer, it would have been really bad.”

“Her positioning was really correct.”

As I heard Mossan and Su-san, I once again felt glad that I heard about her magic beforehand.

As expected, if a magic like that was fired inside a dungeon, it won't end as just a joke.

"Am I being complimented?"(Fiona)

"Yeah, Fiona-san's magic has amazing power, thank god you're in my party."(kuroono)

".....I see."

As she said that, her cheeks seemed a bit red. Guess she's getting drunk as well.

"Oh right, Fiona-san?"

"Yes?"

Before she gets dead drunk, I had something important to say to her.

"Come to my room later, alright?"

"!?!"

parin the sound of a glass falling and shattering came.

"What happened Lily? Are you alright?"(kuroono)

".....sorry."(lily)

Lily was sitting on my lap but it seems she dropped her glass by accident.

"What, did the little fairy also get drunk?"

"No, I'm not letting her drink sake."(kuroono)

She isn't drunk but she must be tired.

Lily could only turn in her normal form during full moon nights but she turned back just her consciousness at village head's home, as well as when she asked me to become the leader through the item she brought from the fountain of light.

According to Lily, by using the [Queen Beryl], she could turn to her normal form but only for 30mins in 1 day since the burden is high.

She could turn to her normal state by using the Divine Protection of the Fairy Queen. But even if it was a key item, its effect was still an enormous magical energy boost only.

Of course, 30mins was the limit to use her full grown body for battle, if it was just her consciousness, she could keep it longer.

But still the burden on her is not zero. It must have accumulated as fatigue in her small body.

For the time being, I should carry her back to the room.

“Lily seems to be tired so we’ll leave first. Tomorrow’s schedule is what I had explained earlier. Once again, look forward to working with you guys.”(kurono)

After getting their agreement, I carry Lily in my arms.

“Kurono-san.”(Fiona)

“Nn?”

“I’ll come as well.”

Fiona-san’s face was even redder than before for some reason.

.

.

.

On top of the bed of the guest room, Kurono, lily and Fiona were sitting.

Kurono with a serious expression, Fiona with her usual cool expression and Lily, between them, with a somewhat displeased expression.

(“Could Kurono-san want me to.....”)

Just a while back, the erotic situation that every adventurer there was imagining except Kurono, was also being imagined by Fiona as well.

("Certainly Kurono-san gave me icecandy, wasn't drawn away by my attack magic, he really is a good guy but it really is too early for such a relationship!")

Fiona who was asked to "Come to my room" for the first time at night was somewhat in chaos right now.

"Fiona, you haven't forgotten the rule in our party right?"

The moment Lily who was lying on the bed said that, she realised that the chance of her losing her chastity tonight, no matter how passionately Kurono approached, was absolutely zero.

And thus, it became a situation where all 3 were quietly sitting (Lily was lying down though) on the bed.

"Lily, is it fine to turn back your consciousness? Aren't you tired??...."

"It's fine, don't worry. After all, you are going to have some important talk now, right? I need to listen properly as well."

Lily answered with a smile, and Kurono gave a somewhat understanding expression.

And without minding Lily anymore, he spoke towards Fiona.

"The reason I called Fiona-san to my room was because I need to talk about something extremely important with you. Since you already told me about being from Arc continent, I decided to also tell about my own identity."

Fiona understood why she was called with her usual sleepy face.

"And, you also want to hear about the Arc continent, Syncrea Republic, and the Cross religion, right?"(Fiona)

Although she still didn't know what Kurono wanted to tell, she did know what he wanted to hear from her.

And she also realised that he called her to his room to avoid letting the others know that she was with the Crusaders before.

"That's right. But what I want to know the most is——"

But, even Fiona didn't expect Kurono to say what he was about to speak next.

“——just what the hell are the [Apostles]?”



Chapter 85 - The Black Gods & The White God

Does God exist? Does he exist in the heart of the believers? No, does he exist no matter what?

There have been various theories regarding God, but in the 17 years I lived in modern Japan, God was nothing but an illusion to me.

At least, I didn't believe that an existence called God that looked like a human watched over the whole world from the heavens above.

I am not against religion or anything but, it was a fact that no one on earth had seen a being that could cause miracles with just looking or touching.

But this different world was a true fantasy world that had its own rules and principles.

Yes, in this world [God] exists.

One of its proofs was the existence of [Divine Protection].

Simply speaking, God gave power to a man and the abilities gained by that man was called the [Divine Protection].

For example, having immense physical strength without using enhancement magic or being able to use magic that you have never learnt or practiced, etc.

I didn't actually feel it but apparently my Black magic is a type of [Divine Protection].

Black magical energy was completely different from the primary magical energy that normally exists in this world and is a type of special energy that is brought about by God.

"In Kurono's case, I think there is a gate in your soul that is connected to the [Black Gods] from where you pull the black magical energy."

"Lily, this is the first I'm hearing of this....."

"Eh, well I thought you already knew, or rather isn't the source of your own magical energy something you'll know somehow automatically?"

“.....I don’t know.”

What the hell are the [Black Gods] anyway? When did I get connected to such a suspicious group of guys?

No, it must have been when I underwent the first experiment that helped me obtain magical energy.

That really did hurt like hell. I can understand if someone says my soul was involved in it.

“I didn’t think Kurono didn’t even know about Gods. But since you can use magic properly, does all these things about your magical energy even matter?”

“Well, I guess but.....[Black Gods], is it.....”

“That’s the generic term for all the gods that are spoken of in the whole Pandora continent. Even Irz village had a shrine dedicated towards a harvest god, right? All such gods together are known as the [Black Gods]. By the way our [Fairy Queen] is also one of them.”

“I see, so it’s like the Yaoyorozu no kamigami.” (T/N: All the deities in Shinto religion are referred to as such .)

The Gods are spread all over the continent and provide their [divine protection] to that area and are worshiped there.

It’s the same if the gods back in my world also gave such divine protection wherever they were enshrined. Well, this must be also a type of ‘magic’, I guess.

But in my case, it is only to the extent of providing magical energy and I am not directly connected to a god.

It’s conveniently called the [Divine Protection of the Black Gods].

Then if I also start worshipping a specific God, will I also gain some kind of super powers?

[Divine Protection] isn’t something you could get easily just by praying apparently. Looks like the gods are also calculative, or should I say realistic minded.

“Now that Kurono-san has understood what Gods are, I’ll talk about the [Apostles].”(Fiona)

“Yes.”

Right, I wanted to hear about the Apostles in the first place.

It seems I only vaguely understood the concept of gods in this different world so I was first told that.

“[Apostles] are beings that have transcended humans after specially receiving the [Divine Protection] of the [White God]. According to the Cross religion, the White God is the creator of all existence and the humans were created the last for the purpose of ruling over this world, or so they preach.”

It seems in the Arc continent a God similar to the God in bible that created the god in 1 week exists.

Damn this really is completely suspicious all over.

“I don’t know whether he actually created the world or not but in the Arc continent he is the oldest and the most influential God.”

“And then the greedy [White God] wanted to increase his territory so he sent those damned humans to the Pandora continent controlled by the [Black Gods].”

“It’s as you say Lily-san. The campaign towards the Pandora continent was started due to an [Oracle] sent by the White God.”

The Crusaders in my original world were ones that took military action in the name of reclaiming their holy grounds and whatnot but to think that here, God actually clearly gave the order himself.

.

“The [White God] desired this land, thus we, the [Crusaders, have come to this land to offer it to him.”

.

That was what Sariel had said to me at Daedalus but it turned to be a literally true.

“Expanding the land under control, what exactly are they going to do?”

“The Cross religion will build up churches that only worship the [White God] and will exterminate all other religions and its worshippers. As a result, all types of culture and religion that already existed here would be destroyed, and disappear probably.”

Basically, same as what happened in my world.

Sariel did say [convert] but the image I had in my mind back then was actually correct.

It would have been fine if it ended with just converting but considering what happened at Irz, those bastards are truly bent on completely exterminating any race other than the humans.

They won't even accept surrender. These guys really are demons.

“I'll come back to the topic, how many Apostles are there?”(kurono)

“There will always be 12 total.”(Fiona)

“The number is always fixed?”

“Yes, though it might take some time till a new one is found in case the number falls.”

As expected, the favourites of God aren't 100 or 1000 people. At least they won't send an army full of Apostles so that's a relief.

“If you end up facing them, it'll only be one at a time. Probably, the highest chance would be the supreme commander [7th Apostle Sariel], I think.”(Fiona)

“.....we already fought.”(kurono)

“Yeah, that's not something you can forget.”(Lily)

“Oh my, how did that happen?”(Fiona)

Looks like even Fiona-san is surprised as she looks at me with a clearly surprised expression.

“When we went to scout Daedalus, I happened to meet her on the castle walls. Since she called herself the supreme commander, I tried to assassinate her there and then but instead got beaten myself.”

“That’s.....you did well even surviving that.”(Fiona)

Are those eyes looking at me with pity for doing a stupid thing Fiona-san?

“Yeah, if Lily didn’t help, I would have definitely died there.”

“No such thing, that woman let us go intentionally.”(lily)

I was unconscious till I woke up at Riol pass, so I don’t know how exactly Lily saved me from Sariel.

Although she did say that it was okay to run away, but to have let us go even after I tried to kill her, just what the hell is that Sariel thinking? Did she think of me as trash that was not even worth killing?

“The Apostles are the strongest existence in the church. There is no one, at least in the Arc continent, that could face them one-on-one. You were lucky to have gotten away.”(Fiona)

“She must have let me go on a whim, but, alright, I’ll make her regret that decision. You said one-on-one, but what about against large number of people? Do they have any weaknesses? Can they even be killed?”

That would be the main problem. If they turn out to be immortal due to the power of god, then it would be all useless.

I did injure her right arm with the [bone needle of Basilisk] so I think that’s not the case but still.....

Could it be they would revive even after killed through a miracle of God?

“They can be killed. No matter how strong the divine protection they have, the body is still human. If you cut off their heads, pierce their heart, or cause them to bleed too much; if you can deal such a fatal blow, they will definitely die.”(Fiona)

I guess a perfect [immortal] body is impossible even in a world of magic.

They won’t revive either so that’s a relief.

“Just how Kurono-san draws out black magical energy from the gods, the apostles use white magic drawn out from the gate in their souls that is connected to the [White God]. Just, the amount they can use is enormous. If you ask how much then, let’s see, can Kurono-san use black magic infinitely?”

“No way, even I have a limit.”

I ran out of magical energy a lot of times during those experiments after all.

Recently, I even fell unconscious during the evolution of the cursed hatchet against that Priest.

“Apostle can never experience the phenomenon known amongst magicians as [running out of magic]. No matter how many magics they use, their energy is instantly replenished. Of course, the amount provided by the [White God] is infinite. They will never run out of magical energy.”

But that infinite magical energy was still just one part of their divine protection. I was told this terrifying truth.

“Then how do you kill them? There is no other way but to prepare a magic that can kill them in a single blow?”(kurono)

I doubt something that convenient exists.

“The most reliable way to kill an Apostle is to keep on attacking an Apostle with the full intent to die along with them. Even if they have infinite magical energy, the body that is human, will not be able to bear the burden of infinitely using magic. But, to exhaust the body of an Apostle to such a level, at least 10,000 soldiers are required, or so I have heard. I don’t whether that number is correct or not but if the Apostle ran away in between, their body will regenerate and you’ll be back to square one. There’s a chance that 10,000 men would be uselessly sacrificed as well.”(Fiona)

“A war of attrition is not impossible but is unrealistic, is it?”

The Apostles should be able to maintain their bodies at least. To fight till their body reached their limits——I see, to encircle one so that he doesn’t run away, it really will require at least 10,000 men against just 1.

“On the Arc continent, when against an Apostle, they either try to run away or try to hold them back, but never even think of killing them, or so I’m told.

Though, there has been a case where the Apostle was actually killed in action, but they had sacrificed a lot of men for that.”(Fiona)

“And there are 12 of these guys.”(kurono)

Basically these guys alone are a full army. And adding the normal army soldiers to this.....the Syncrea Republic might actually possess a fighting force of 1000000.

“There’s no way all 12 would come to Pandora continent, so be relieved. Except the 7th Apostle, the rest won’t leave Elysion undefended and the others are also deployed towards the borders of the Republic to settle problems and maintain their hegemony. There are some Apostles that are even missing.”

“Missing? What do you mean?”

“I’ve heard, that one has mixed with the public and is secretly planning a world reform, one is secretly researching something, there are many other rumours as well like that actually there are not even 12 Apostles, etc. I don’t know the truth though; they’re only rumours after all.”

World reformation? Well, whatever. It seems fine to just leave them be as long as they remain in the territory of the Republic while punishing villains and nobles in the name of justice while waving the flag their Cross.

This is actually favourable for us. Let Saniel be the only Apostle here, please.

“One becomes an Apostle not because of his/her faith, status or strength of magic but due to suddenly receiving the [Divine Protection] one day out of nowhere. Thus, if there are those that work passionately for the church then there are also those who hide themselves and freely do whatever they want as well.”

“Since they have the Divine protection, they are in a religiously strong position and are also strong. There is no one who can comment or act against them, is it.”(kurono)

“The Pope is considered even among the Apostles hierarchically but as you would expect he is not that strong. But, the duty of the Apostle, ‘to eliminate the enemies of God’, is common amongst all of them so they won’t betray the church. Even in history there has been no Apostle that has betrayed the God.”(Fiona)

Although there are allowed to act independently and freely, as long as they are receiving strength from the White God, they'll still protect their place it seems.

"Well it's fine. If the Apostles are that special, we won't be seeing them all the time. At least, they won't directly come to attack the refugees."(kuroono)

The only Apostle on Pandora is Sariel. Not to mention that she's also the supreme commander as well. I doubt she'll move around very freely.

The territory of Daedalus is huge. They won't focus on this far west rural area for no reason I think.

"But, even if Sariel doesn't come, the normal capturing unit of Crusaders will definitely come. The problem is how strong they are and what are their numbers."(kuroono)

"I might be an ex-merc, but even I am not aware of such fine details of the Crusaders. If there's something I can tell, then that would be that be only the basics about the knights and troops only."

"No, I don't know anything about them so that's actually more than enough."(kuroono)

I have more or less understood the purpose of the Crusaders. All that's left is the various reasons and interests of the various groups of humans.

I have no need to know all that.

All that I need to know is the specific military ability of the Crusaders.

"If possible, can I hear what Kuroono-san had to say first?"(Fiona)

As I was wondering what should I ask first, such a demand came from Fiona-san.

"aa, that's right, then I'll tell what I had to say first."

Where should I start——I worried about the same things when I first told Lily about this. Well, let's start with the main core of the matter.

"Actually, I came here from a different world."

Kuro No Maou

- Volume 7 -

Counter Attack Preparations

Chapter 86 - Disappearance of an Apostle

Early morning, one of the Apostles had disappeared from one of the guest rooms.

“What should I do?.....”

So, once again the 7th Apostle Sariel was racking her brains.

“It, It’ll be fine. We’ll find Lord Misa soon!”

Just as the 12th Apostle Mariabelle, who tried to console Sariel for no reason, had said, the one who had disappeared was the 11th Apostle Misa.

This morning, when the sister came to her room to prepare for waking her up, there was only a scattered cushion on the large canopy bed and the god-loved girl that should have been sleeping there was nowhere to be seen.

This tragic news came to Sariel who woke up had woken up at daybreak as per the customs of the monastery.

“Currently, we have closed all the doors of the Capital Daedalus and have also sent a search party into the city as well.”

The one who had quickly taken such measures was Sariel’s aide, Archbishop Liuchrome’s work.

This meeting of Sariel with the 3 Apostles was something that had been concealed from the public and the soldiers had only been told that it was an important person.

But still, since Misa’s features were distinct, they could make do with just telling the soldiers about her characteristics and even a soldier who had never seen her directly would soon recognise her.

That is why, even with such complicated circumstances, as long as Misa was still hiding in Daedalus city, they would find her sooner or later.

But, that’s only if she’s still here.

“If Lord Misa has used her ‘ability’ then she would have already gone far away from Daedalus already.”

As Sariel spoke that while sighing, the faces of the beautiful brothers cramped as if in pain.

“You’re talking about [Sky Fortress – Peaceful Heart]”

With a fed up face, Mariabelle said the name of the troublesome ability held by Misa.

“Certainly, if she is flying in the air then it’s useless no matter how much we search on land. If she secluded herself in the castle here, there would be no need for her to appear either, so this must be her own whim.”

The 11th Apostle Misa’s [Sky Fortress – Peaceful Heart]’s effect was literally as per the name.

If she uses ‘that’, she can fly on the same way as the only Pegasus Knights can.

“I’ll go.”

Sariel proposed the only thing she could do.

Even if she was the Supreme commander, she had no ability other than going out in battles.

She knew that it was much more efficient to stay quiet and just leave everything to Liuchrome regarding accurate decision making and orders.

“I am very sorry. I had kept it in mind to not trouble Her Excellency Sariel in any case except battles but.....”(Liu)

“Don’t worry, Lord Misa is my guest after all.”(Sariel)

Liuchrome thanked as he bowed deeply.

“By the way, Mariabelle.”

“eh, what is it Nii-san?”

Due to being called suddenly, Mariabelle ended up calling him informally.

“Where is the 3rd Apostle Lord Mikael right now?”

Yes, the ones who came to visit Sariel were 3 people. The disappeared Misa, Mariabelle who was here and the beautiful [holy woman] that didn't show up even with all this ruckus, 3rd Apostle Mikael.

“aa, Lord Mikael after hearing about Lord Misa——”(maria)

.

“That's troublesome, then I shall also go and look for her ~”

.

“——is what she said.”(maria)

As if going on a morning walk, she had also left, is what Mariabelle told.

“Is there a way to contact Lord Mikael?”(Liu)

“.....aa”

Even though she said that she is going to look for her, just where is she roaming in this unknown city of Daedalus?

Thinking rationally, a normal person would have looked around the castle and returned while saying 'I didn't find her.' But this person was an Apostle with infinite magical energy.

If she felt like it, she could simply keep on walking till she reached the ends of the earth.

The title of [Holy woman] wasn't for just show. She could keep on worrying about the whereabouts of Misa and without even caring about herself, she could keep on walking forever to look for her.

“This might lead to a second disaster.....”

Without scolding his brother for not stopping her, Liuchrome said those heavy words as he sighed.

“I'll search of Lord Mikael as well.”(sariel)

Really sorry, both brothers bowed towards Sariel instantly.

Chapter 87 - Defence Plan

In the conference room on the second floor of the guild hall, Kurono and the rest had gathered.

Not coincidentally, but because Kurono had asked them to. Along with the 3 members of [Element Masters], Vulcan of [Vulcan Powered], Irina of the [Three Hunting Princesses], skeleton magician Mozrun aka Mossan and the slime Su-san, these 7 were sitting around a big table.

Except the members of Element master, the rest still were wondering the reason to have assembled like this.

Without minding that, Kurono spread out a map of the western region of Daedalus on the table and spoke.

“Let’s start the strategy meeting of the [Adventurer Alliance]!”

The name ‘Adventurer Alliance, was obviously the name given to the Adventurers taking part in this Emergency Quest.

Kurono had grandly declared the start of the strategy meeting but,

“haa?”

The reaction of rest of the members was totally cold and vacant.

“Strategy meeting? What the hell is that?”

As the representative of every dumbfounded person here, Vulcan asked Kurono.

“Well, a strategy meeting means a strategy meeting. Everyone does that before challenging a quest as a party, right?”(kurono)

Basically what the adventurers talked about in the guild lobbies or during meals was that.

“Well that’s because it’s a party after all. For random collection of adventurers like this, the leader takes all the decisions independently; he won’t call for the other members.”

“Is that so?”

“Of course! If you start asking the opinion of every damn person, you won’t be reaching to any conclusion after all! That’s why the strongest one becomes the leader so that nobody else gets a reason to complain!!”

Vulcan’s complaint was basically similar to how animals decide their boss, but in this Pandora continent, it was normal.

If the number is small like a Party then coordinating is easy, but in cases like this where various people gather of different races and abilities, it’s best to leave it to the strongest guy to control and govern them all as Vulcan had said.

This wasn’t a peaceful land like Kurono’s Japan. Not to mention that the adventurers were mostly a gathering of rowdy ruffians. So, it was pretty much impossible to have every one peacefully listen to each other.

But, even Kurono had understood that during his 3 months as an adventurer.

Still he had proposed a strategy meeting.

“Although what Vulcan is saying is reasonable but I, a rank 1 adventurer, am still not very experienced. I’m not even well versed with the geography of this area either. Whether the plan I think is executable or not, what can each and every do and cannot, if all this is not something within my knowledge, I won’t be able to come up with an effective plan. Asking others for opinion might seem pathetic to other adventurers but I need everyone’s strength. Can you think of this as helping me and cooperate?”

On Kurono’s straight call for cooperation, the hall was completely silent.

But that silence was soon broken.

“Isn’t it fine? If the leader is asking for our knowledge then we should simply properly respond his request.”

The first one to accept the proposal was Irina.

“yeah, let’s think of all 50 here as a single party! Well, I myself am a solo guy though! Ahhahha!”

“I also agree. Kurono-san isn’t a simple minded guy it seems. He should be able to integrate every opinion properly.”

Mozrun and Su-san also gave their agreements.

Vulcan was the only one with a bitter expression but he was also, at the end, a good guy, he also didn't mope around too much.

"Can't be helped, we should look after our inexperienced Leader after all!"(Vulcan)

" Thanks, that saved me the trouble. As Mossan said, lets think of all us as a single paty and complete this quest together."

Kurono relaxed after everyone decided to help.

It seems that yesterday's battle against the scout troop had earned him proper trust from others.

Everyone here, except the 3 from Element Master, were famous in the area for their abilities. If he got their help, it would be easier to cooperate with the other adventurers as well.

Due to Kurono asking them for their proper cooperation, it could be said the Adventurer Alliance increased its solidarity by 1 level.

"So, what are we here to decide? Something like that Scorched earth tactic you used yesterday?"

"That was just a mere trick to slow down the enemy; it's not a tactic to properly stop them."

Although it was a trick, it needed to be done as quickly as possible so Kurono had postponed the meeting till today and had gone to Irz Village yesterday.

"Stop them? Is there any other way except fighting?"

"Yeah, aren't we going to lie in wait for them here in the sturdy gates of Kuar?"

Normally thinking, that was the only way.

In the first place, the people of Pandora didn't put much emphasis on tactics and strategies.

Thus, in cases of battling with large numbers, they only thought about the division between rear guard and vanguard and also finding a spacious place to fight properly.

“No, that won’t work.”

But, Kurono thought.

Kurono Maou who was a part of the literature club and was someone who aimed to mass produce those painful chuuni novels as a high schooler, he was much more knowledgeable about [Battles] than others.

Of course, that knowledge was something only that could satisfy an intellectual, but whether he could apply it in reality would be a totally different matter.

Although, even Kurono doesn’t expect these tactics to show 100% effect as shown in text books and heroic legends.

After risking his life countless times in battles, he even doubted that these were only optimistic theories that would only work in his own fantasy.

But again, Kurono didn’t have anything else to rely on either.

A boy of only 17 yrs old, the experience of such cases he had was almost nil after all. Especially in cases involving ‘tactics’.

If these adventurers had actual proper strategies and tactics, Kurono would not have even meddled like this.

But as expected, to execute these tactics, he needed the advice of the veterans of this world.

Kurono wasn’t very confident regarding his own strategy but, without showing that on his face, he started to explain it.

“We’ll abandon Kuar. Our defensive line will be——”

Kurono’s finger pointed towards a point on the map.

“Daedalus’ westernmost village of Alzas.”

Alzas village was a village that existed alongside the giant Rone river that flowed from the Gallahad mountain ranges. It was a village of the same size as Irz.

It had the Rone river on its east side where the main gate was, and a tributary called Haren by its west side which had the back gate of the village. It was like a small island between 2 rivers.

“Using the Adventurer Guild on the banks of Rone river as the fortress, we’ll stop the Crusaders at the front gate of Alzas.”

“Why does it have to be there? The walls and gate surrounding Kuar are better. And the guild of Alzas is not especially sturdy either.”

Irina had gone to Alzas it seems, but Kurono had not.

But Kurono’s impression that Alzas had the same level of facilities as Irz was proven true by her explanation.

“What’s more important is the terrain rather than the facilities. By that, I am talking about the big river that’ll be in front of us. I’ll ask this just in case, but does anyone here has any experience in fighting army troops?”(kurono)

Except Fiona, who was an ex-merc, nobody raised their hands.

These guys were adventurers, not soldiers after all, so it wasn’t really surprising.

“Rank 4 adventurers should have plenty of experience fighting monsters like goblins who fight in large groups, right? But the Crusaders aren’t on the level of those wild monsters. They have huge numbers and are also highly trained making them able to use coordinated attacks.”

Last night, Fiona explained Kurono about the difference between the armies of Daedalus and Syncrea Republic.

Human armies have the knowledge regarding, chain of commands, strategies, formations etc. from a long period of time.

But on the other hand, demon armies left everything to individual strength and only acted as a one large group under a single boss.

As Kurono wondered whether to fight on the plains (Kuar) or to use the rivers (Alzas), he realized that he himself wasn't very experienced in fighting in big groups and organisations.

"As the individual strength got stronger, they could easily handle weak monsters who were large in numbers but that won't work with a human army. No matter how strong they are, if they were attacked after being surrounded by 100 or 1000 soldiers, they'll face the same end as a rank 1 adventurer surrounded and tortured to death by goblins.

Basically, if only 50 of us fought in a place as wide as Kuar village, we'll be surrounded and annihilated by the enemy army."

Although Kuar had a pretty sturdy wall so they won't lose instantly, but the result will still be the same as what Kurono meant.

"Humans don't have any special abilities as compared to other races so we can limit their movements a lot with simply rivers."

There were races like the lizardmen and Mermaids that won't be deterred by something like rivers, but the opponents were only humans.

"Attacking an enemy as they are defenceless while crossing the river is a basic strategy."

"fuun, well leading the enemy towards an advantageous terrain is something everyone does. Also, if the enemy will come directly from the highway then there were no troubles like leading and baiting them there like monsters."

"Even a roughly gathered group of adventurers can at least perform a proper ambush."

"Exactly. Then I'll tell the more specific details regarding this now. Which one of them can be done and who will do them is what we need to decide now. Unfortunately, we don't have the time to discuss it at ease. Let's quickly wrap things up here and get to work!"(kurono)

Chapter 88 – Alsace Village

If you go in series, the villages along the north-west highway starting from Irz Village, then there are Irz Village, Kuar Village, Hejito Village, Vato Village and in the westernmost part is the Alsace Village.

Kurono along with the 20 adventurers he selected, were heading towards Alsace Village which would become their defense lines.

With the adventurers from Hejito and Vato Village, when added with the adventurers from Alsace. The adventurer alliance will have 103 adventurers in total.

Since a messenger was sent for informing every village from Kuar Village about the emergency situation, so it didn't take much time for Lily to convince the heads as it did with Nahad.

And there was no opposition for Kurono being the leader of the alliance, due to the most famous 'Vulcan Powered' along with other rank 4 parties working with him. Every adventurer was silently, without any objections accepting his commands.

There is a problem but it was not the adventurers

"Why are you in Alsace!? Adventurers should be at the rear guard right!!"

Just like Kurono became the leader of adventurers, Nachim became the leader of the alliance of vigilante corps from every village.

As Kurono walked a step into the adventurer guild of Alsace, Nachim's voice resounded in the whole lobby.

"Ah, maybe you were frightened and run awa—"

Just like that he spoke insulting words to Kurono with no place to intercept him

[[Shut up annoying bastard, I will wait 10 seconds get lost within that time.]](Lily)

Lily spoke those words in the mind of Nachim using Telepathy.

"Y-Yes, well then adieu, Lily-san!" [ET: Creepy]

Nachim showing somewhat happy expression, left the guild.

"Doesn't it look like, he resents me a lot for some reason?"

"Ufufu, that might be true."

“What did you ‘say’ to him, Lily?”

He had already guessed the reason, why Nachim suddenly changed his attitude and left.

“Un, We don’t have much time to deal with him, so I politely asked him to leave” [ET: Was just too polite , (lol)]

“I see, Thank you”

He still didn’t know what line Nachim had heard in his mind.

“But, if it will be bad, not having a good cooperation with vigilante corps alliance too, I will talk to them about it sometime.”

The work of adventurers is to guard the rear, and buy time by intercepting the enemy that appear from behind.

In regards for, vigilante corps their work was to escort the refugees and maintaining security and public order.

Basically, both parties are not to meet with each other, but till the time refugees were to leave Alsace, it is only natural to avoid having discord and creating needless trouble.

“Well it is good, for now we have to talk with the guild master from here and ask him for us to help him fortification of guild.”

Kurono started walking towards the conference room, the guild master might be waiting in to complete his purpose for coming to Alsace.

The evacuation of refugees, is for now going without any hindrances.

That is because the highway from Irz~Alsace is well maintained, so it is not a problem for a large number of people to walk on it. And the distance between every village is also at most 1 day walk.

However, the journey from here to Spada won’t be so easy as it was.

The highway connecting Alsace and Spada along the national border is not maintained well and also has bad footing. Furthermore, due to it being away from places human live, the frequency of monsters popping out for food is more. [ET: You can understand what sort of food? Obviously, popsicles.]

From here onwards there is no other village to rest after 1 day of walking, so there is a need for camping.

When camping, the preparations and set-up must be completed before sunset.

That is because, they will have to secure the safe places and water sources near the camping ground, they also have to find the suitable terrain for the tent to be placed and much more reasons and will also take time. So, if they will start setting-up and preparations from evening, they won't make it in time.

Till now they had villages nearby so they could walk till the evening, but from now on the walking time will have to be drastically lowered.

Under these situations, every human will need to walk 20 kilometres at average per day.

Even this distance of 20 kilometres will be reduced because of children, elder people and sick people.

As a matter of fact, no one knows how much time will they should buy for them to run away from Crusaders.

Kurono is being cornered by the fact that he has to stop Crusaders tracks by even 1 minute 1 second.

And, that plan is the defense plan he had thought of in the guild of Kuar Village few days ago.

“—and that's how it is. The adventurers alliance is thinking of gaining time for the evacuation to complete and so they will spread the line of defense here.”

Inside the conference room inside the adventurer guild of Alsace village, Kurono is telling the outline of defense plan to the guild master, Bean.

The middle aged dwarf, Bean, while stroking his thick beard answered a pleasant reply.

“Fumu, Fumu, Understood, we will help, so just say the things you want.”

“Thank you very much”

“But still, you really think of turning this worn-out guild into a fortress? We can give compensation to some extent, but since this is originally a wooden structure, so I doubt it will have the sturdiness of a fundamental fortress” Beans speaks logical words, but Kurono assures him while adding what he said.

“It is alright, I will make this guild as hard as a common stone in one night.”

“Interesting, looks like you have some sort of plans”

“Yes, but it is also needed to protect the surrounding areas of guild. I would like the people who can do carpentering and construction works for fortifying this guild.”

There are many high rank adventurers, but there are not even one with the skills of construction or carpentering.

A person who can supervise the construction is naturally needed, in other words, a combat engineer.

“I myself am a dwarf, and I know many people who are good in those areas, you can leave that work to us.”

Bean accepts Kurono’s requests with a quick and pleasant reply.

Maybe, due to him being a Guild Master he didn’t show any sign of worrying about his evacuation being late than others due to his cooperation in the fortification.

Maybe this is the way an adult behaves, Kurono was almost about to salute to him without a second thought. [ET: Though he didn’t]

“Thank you very much. It’s just that the the main force of enemy will reach here at the very least, in 3 days.”

That is because it took exact 3 days for Kurono to reach here from Kuar Village.

It took 3 days for the horse riding adventurers to reach here, so if the enemy also came in the same method, it would take the same amount of time.

It is hard to imagine for them to leave the foot soldiers and just burst in with cavalymen, but that might happen.

“After 3 days pass, the enemy can burst in at any time.”

They have to at all costs complete the minimum defense preparation in just 3 days.

Bean understood Kurono’s reasonings, and once again replies with a pleasant answer but this time in a loud voice.

“Very well, we will change this Alsace Village into an impregnable big stronghold by the 28th day of Shinyou.”

Chapter 89 – Counterattack Preparations (1)

The construction of the fortification of the guild building started from that day only.

Apart from the adventurers inside the guild, the dwarfs called out by Guildmaster Bean had assembled and were already working on fortification.

It is not the work of Kurono to supervise small matters on the site, but due to the equipment being made, he himself gives out some demands.

The following are the demands given by him.

1. Reinforcement of Rhone River embankment.

They, from the get go, didn't have enough time, manpower, and materials for making a completely new protective wall. This left them with no choice but to use the things they can get their hands on.

The embankment is a flood control structure made up by piling up sand and earth, therefore it's sturdiness was far more than that of fence of wood.

So they will use some methods to change it into a protective wall.

But still, it is after all an embankment of a small village, so it's forbidden to have high expectations of very high wall.

Furthermore, though the foundation is an embankment, on it's top are the fence of wood. The trees covering Alsace were disassembled and then constructed a new fence of embankment.

The lack of time and materials is just as above mentioned. Though this is a little unreliable, but it couldn't be helped as this was the most they had.

By the way, the reason for why defensive magic is not used to replace defensive walls, is due to their limited time of effect.

It is easy to make up a tall and solid defensive wall with defensive magic the moment it is activated, but it would start deteriorating in little time and it would be impossible to maintain it's shape.

To create the 24×7 hours running barrier just like the one near Daedalus's castle walls. It would need time, engineering skills, and equipment. The same things that Kurono and others were lacking.

And so, they have no choice to start making fence from scratch. Though it is classical but it ensures good defense.

2. Make an underground escape passage right beneath the Guild.

This will serve as an escape route and supply line too.

Kurono doesn't has in the least intention to let other adventurers die as 'sacrificial pieces'. He intends to return alive with everyone, so it is natural to secure an escape route.

This work will not take more than 3 days, it will be more better to call it trench rather than tunnel. This was also ascertained after the first look at plan.

And, with more than 100 adventurers stationed here, it is indispensable to secure a route for the supply of food and water.

Kurono alone can work for 1 whole week without sleeping, eating or drinking (Only if his magic doesn't run out). But the same can't be said for others.

If there are not enough replenishments, the morale of troops will only fall, this is furthermore important when there is only a cooperative relationship.

3. Remodelling of Guild's interior for easier movement.

This is destroy the walls and ceilings which will be hindrance at the time of battle to resupply men and goods.

Those three are the demands he has given till now, but

"There isn't much material for protective wall."

this problem occurred almost really fast.

Bean was tracing the the line given by Kurono on the map. That line will be the position of protective wall.

"We are a very small village just as it looks. We don't have enough timber, stone and other materials as such. And to make matters worse, we don't have enough time, so we won't able to cover a large area too."

"Because of that problem, I would like you to make this."

Kurono takes out a single wire from the shadow space.

It's length is 30 centimetres, one could understand it is made from some sort of dark grey metal due to its lustre.

If it was just that much it won't be much unusual, steel wire were used as bundling material, to create traps for animals and many other things. It can be found in any blacksmith's workshop.

But the wire taken about by Kurono has a thorn like substance covering it. It is easily understandable that the wire is not any normal wire.

"What is that thing? A wire with a horn attached to it?"

"Yes, it is called as 'barbed wire'. Just like it sounds, this is a normal wire with thorn attached to it."

But, Kurono bends forward and puts the barbed wire on the table.

"Against a human, it will definitely work as a hindrance. Though it might not have any effect on lizardman and golem or any other race with hard scales and skin."

Not only Kurono, but every person living in modern era had seen barbed wire on daily basis.

It is placed on the fences around the private properties or off-limit areas to prevent intruders from entering. This thing can be understood by this world's people if they saw a barbed wire, without explaining it to them. First of all it is made from iron, so maybe even if it had been developed, the popularization might have been slow.

"Fumu, I see, really if we lay this out, we can cover more extensive range without having the trouble of creating fence of trees."

Along with that, if it is wrapped around the fence already made, it will definitely give more defensive effect and no one would touch it without thinking twice.

"If only we have iron, we will can make them and use them by wrapping them. Tomorrow the previously requested bundle of iron might come, we will make use of it and use the barbed wire as a barricade."

"Got it, let's complete it fast."

Bean who understood its effectiveness, nods.

"But, will it be able to block those wearing thick whole body armor?"

"The normal attire of Crusaders is chainmail under a white surcoat. This will be able to block many cavalrymen and foot soldiers.

But even barbed is not all-purpose. They might have people who can jump over them, aren't I right?

but dealing with people like those is the job of us adventurers."

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While Kurono was near some steps from the construction of fortress, on the other side the members of 'Vulcan Powered' were roaming through the Fairy Garden.

"It is hot....."

Vulcan grumbles.

But that is not because of him being weak. It is natural for a beast man to complain about heat walking under the sunlight during mid-summer while wearing natural thick fur as surcoats.

As all the party members are beast men, so they have got no choice but to keep on walking while having the same problem as Vulcan.

"Will it really.....go easily like this?"

The other main reason for them to be sweating from head to toe was because they are wearing the Crusader's cross and white surcoats. In short, disguise.

As for what reason this was needed. Kurono ordered them that this was a continuation of scorched earth tactics. The Plan Part 2 a.k.a 'MPK Plan'. [ET: Should I say Kurono became a Chuuni][SK: He always was a chuuni.]

In this world which doesn't have any English alphabets, the words 'MPK' were being misunderstood by everyone as a single word except Kurono.

"To hell with MPK, if this doesn't work I'm gonna blast off Kurono's ass."

By the way, the surcoats all the members are wearing are hundred percent real, they were taken off the corpses of dead soldiers after all, but their was no size fitting for Vulcan, so he had surcoat made by order in guild by sewing up white sheets together and embroidering a cross emblem on to it. The surcoat Vulcan wore is made of more thick cloth than normal ones, so he was melting in the heat more than other members.

"Everyone halt! Target discovered!"

The voice of the beast man archer with good eyes resounds.

"Is that so, then let's wrap this up fast and return back to Hejito Village."

Vulcan's hand reaches for the hilt of his broad word. In front of his eyes, was the settlement of the famous rank 1 monster 'Goblin'.

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On the other hand, the rank 4 thief Su-san a.k.a Suusu, was climbing on the cliff of Galahad mountain range, which Kurono climbed while having lily on his back with great deal of effort.

"He really gives some 'absurd' quests."

A gust of winds blows towards Suusu, clinging on the rock cliff, which caused her white surcoat to flutter relentlessly.

But, she changes the tips of her legs and hands to the slime like jelly parts and grips the vertical wall with unbelievable grip power. She shows absolutely no fear.

She without separating her hands and legs, starts crawling on the cliff, like a slime. [ET:Wow.....]

"Well then, a little left till the destination. I need to work more hard to not lose to others!"

The place she is heading to is the nest of rank 4 monster 'Garuda'.

And for this quest only she, with best espionage abilities, will be able to complete.

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The three elves sisters from 'Three Hunting Princesses' were hiding themselves in the forest along the north-west highway. They are also in charge of reconnaissance mission.

"Whoa, the queue is still walking.....there really are many of them."

The third sister Hanna who looks at the queue of Crusaders, once again recognises the vast armies of their enemies.

The Crusaders wearing white surcoats with the design of cross, and holding flags with the same design, are marching in a well-ordered manner while matching each other's pace.

The spears of foot soldiers is lined, and in front of them are the cavalrymen covered in silver heavy armor and are walking boldly.

"I have only seen the army of daedalus as big as of this scale."

The second sister Laura, recalls the commemoration parade of Daedalus army she once watched.

The bright white attired Crusaders are a complete contrast to Daedalus army wearing jet black armor and helmet.

The three are reminded of the fact that these white attired troops are the ones who defeated daedalus army and are now walking boldly in the territory of daedalus.

“Look above over there neesan!”

On Hanna’s word Irina and Laura raise up their heads, and see many shadows in the mid-air.

“Pegasus Knight!? They even have this.....really troublesome these peeps.....”

Seeing many pegasus knights leisurely flying, even Irina who always is calm couldn’t hide her amazement.

As riding animals pegasus are more effective than horses, and the techniques used to control pegasus to fly in sky can’t be compared to that of horse-riding.

Though becoming a pegasus knight is time and money taking, but to compensate for those disadvantages, the pegasus can fly high and are agile. Furthermore, the pegasus riders are not cheap and easily available to any country, but having a whole troop of them means that particular country is a lot powerful.

Irina was feeling sense of danger upon seeing the opponents mightiness, powerful pegasus soldiers and they had to eventually fight.

“The people who attacked Irz before and the annihilated scout party were only a small part of them. Just like Kurono said, the enemy has high grade equipment and a lot of soldiers too.”

“Will we really have to fight that?”

“This time it is really dangerous”

“But—”

Irina smiles while facing the two sisters showing uneasiness.

Even she is scared and is feeling uneasiness, but she crushes it to death and makes a gentle expressions as always.

“We can’t abandon the villagers. And haven’t we crossed paths with danger a lot of time, we will be fine this time too. Let’s complete this emergency quest.” [ET: Feeling sentimental on this line. But who know what their fate is]

On the words of Irina, both sisters forcefully nod.

In the first place the person who runs away before even fighting just due to opponent’s numbers can never become Rank 3 adventurer.

The ‘Three Hunting Princesses’ are there because they have finished many difficulties and have faced with danger many times.

“Well, let’s get going back already. The pegasus are keeping an eye on surroundings so we will have to take a detour from inside the forest. Is that alright?”

“”Yes, Nee-san””

The three elves completely dissipate their presence and disappear in the gloomy forest.

Chapter 90 - Counter Attack Preparations (2)

On one side, the adventurers were completing their roles at various places while Lily and Fiona were also preparing in one of the rooms of the guild.

「الان تعاش ت تبع مشرقة الشر الظلام طرد الان تعاش ت تبع」

Lily's chant resounded inside the room and a magic circle was deployed with her as the centre.

As she kept chanting, the container in front of her that had white powder till the brim started to faintly glitter.

“.....”

Although she was in her child form, Fiona watched as Lily showed the concentration level of a master craftsman.

In contrast to Lily who was using magic to the extent of getting a sweaty forehead, Fiona was doing a simple job of grinding medicinal plants with an even more sleepy expression than usual.

「——الان تعاش ت تبع مشرقة الشر الظلام طرد الان تعاش ت تبع」

The magic circle gave off a brighter light for a second and then it vanished.

It seemed as the magic effect was shown as Lily stretched her short limbs and ‘fuu-’ took a breath.

“Is it finished?”

Fiona asked Lily as she took a nap.

“nn, Not yet. There’s still one last touch left.”

Lily answered with an energetic voice even though her small face looked tired and was sweaty.

Fiona impolitely thought that ‘her child version really looked cute’ as she saw Lily

“I see. Then you’ll have to return to your actual appearance as well.”

“Yes, Lily will work hard!” (T/N: Lily talks in 3rd person sometimes if had forgotten)

Fiona once again had impolite thoughts like ‘So I can only see her like this now, her normal form is wicked and mean after all’.

“I’ll also be done soon. This seems to be the last bundle of Rixei grass. There’s nothing else to help with, so till then I’ll work on creating ‘normal’ potions.”(Fiona)

What they were creating right now was not something ‘normal’ but ‘special’ it seems.

It was the [Fairy’s Miracle Drug] that Lily had been selling for over the past 30 years.

Till now it had been used only to treat diseases but after using Lily’s extra magic on it as well, it became effective enough to stop bleedings and close wounds as well.

They were going to fight Crusaders next, they needed as many medicines as they could have.

Currently in the 3 days of time that Kurono predicted, they were focusing on mass producing healing and medicinal potions.

Among such potions, Lily’s miracle drug that was much more effective than the potions sold in market had been given the max priority and finding the materials for it was made an important job.

“If only I could use healing magic as well..... “

Lily didn’t hear Fiona’s mutterings, but it was a fact that Fiona was looking at Lily, on whom everyone relied on, with a slight bit of envy.

If she could use healing magic instead of her destructive attack magic, she would have not been ostracized by others and could have been useful to others as well. Fiona realized that her thinking was useless so she quickly cut her train of thoughts.

“I’m now a member of Element Master. Kurono-san and Lily-san approved of me. That’s more than enough.”

Although she was still a bit restless, Kurono and Lily had accepted her better than anyone else till now after all.

“Also, I at least know the proper method to make potions.”(Fiona)

Fiona changed her track of thoughts, and thought about the various medicinal plants, medicines, and the knowledge regarding healing magic in her mind.

Actually, in this world, healing magic was of 2 types.

[Heal] that gave temporary effects and [Cure] that accelerated the natural healing rate and completely restored injuries.

Any magic that had the effect of treating wounds was called as [Healing Magic] generally, so [Heal] type magics were also correctly classified under this type.

It was common sense for the people of this world but Kurono whose image of ‘Restorative Magic’ rooted from RPGs, it took him one month in Irz before he realized the difference.

For example, if someone got cut by the knife of a goblin, everyone would choose to use [Heal] type magic.

If the arm was cut then they could use a low level [Heal] to close the wound instantly.

However, [Cure] type magic does not close the wound instantly.

In a battle where a person hangs between life and death, immediate healing, even if temporary, was priceless. But, in the end, the effect will be temporary. Once the magical energy put inside the Magic depletes, the wound will start opening again.

If it was only a one time battle, then one could treat the wound appropriately later and rest while it heals naturally. However a soldier or an adventurer cannot do that.

Thus, to completely recover from an injury faster than normal, [Cure] is used.

In this world, wounds cannot be healed by using magic once like in a game but, in treatment of external wounds, they were still faster than the medicines of the modern world.

And it could be said the same for the Potions as well.

Naturally, Potions also have the [heal] types and [Cure] types.

Adventurers, who don't have a healer, use both these potions when on a quest.

By the way, there is an all-purpose medicine that holds the abilities of both [Heal] and [Cure].

That is the Fairy's miracle drug.

Lily had been selling it to the villagers at a very cheap affordable price till now, but if sold through proper routes, it was even costlier than 1 gold coin.

It was such an expensive medicine but it was doubtful whether Lily herself was aware of that.

"Alright, next!"

Lily lifted from the floor by flapping her wings and jumped on the top of the big table.

There, along with the grinded medicinal plants made by Fiona, all sorts of raw materials and ingredients were kept.

From here onwards, Lily would apply her secret recipe for compounding.

If it was a normal potion, Fiona, who had gone to a magic school, could also make but in this case where Lily made the medicine using her Extra magic, Fiona could not help with anything else than collecting the ingredients.

Lily would be burned and tired by using a lot of concentration and magical energy required for compounding but since she was the only one could make it, it couldn't be helped.

Not to mention that she had to complete it in 3 days instead of her usual time of 1 month.

If she could not turn into her original form, she could not complete the miracle drug either.

In her terms 'the final push' meant using magic that she could not use in her child form.

Normally, it would have been impossible since there was no full moon night in these 3 days but as long as Lily had the [Queen Beryl], she could do something unreasonable as that in a short time span.

"n ~ mumumu....."

Holding the container in her both hands, she started compounding with a serious look in her eyes.

("She's compounding without even weighing them?could she really do it like that? No, if it's her she probably can.")(Fiona)

Without even taking exact measurements, Lily who had been mixing things as if on a whim only looked like a child playing house.

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As the sun started sinking, and the sky turned red, even then the workers working on the fortification of the main gate didn't seem to disperse.

They only had 3 days to complete the work, so it was obvious they decided to use the high priced oil to work even at nights.

And of course, the leader, Kurono also continued working as well or rather he started to prepare for the work that will take the whole night.

"n ~, well, it's something like this."

"Much appreciated. Next is my job."(kurono)

Behind the guild were Mozrun and Kurono, the darkness combination of the black magician and the dark magician.

These two had similar magic properties so they used to work together most of the times.

Especially Kurono who devoted himself to developing new black magics always, he has been taking lessons from Mozrun regarding dark magic.

“Then, my job here is done.”(mozrun)

Facing the wall, Mozrun released black wriggly tentacle like substances from within his robe. They climbed the walls of the guild and made a magic circle on the white wall with a black ink like colour.

As Mozrun had said, the magic circle had been completed and soon the black tentacles disappeared like the mist.

“Man I’m tired. It was really troublesome to cover the wall in just half day.”(Mozrun)

Mozrun had created black magic circles on all the walls of the guild in just half a day.

Its effect was simple. To enhance the element of darkness, that’s it.

But, because [Eternity] property was included to avoid the extinguishment of magical energy, the spell and technique were extremely high level.

“But, I wonder if it’s possible——”

He had shown his skills as a rank4 magician but,

“—to cover the whole guild building with enhancement boost.”

The plan Kurono had given to enhance the guild was truly doubtful.

A magic to enhance and fortify a building was definitely possible but it would take the same time and effort as the carpenters who built it took and will require a lot of magicians to do ‘remodelling work’ at a large scale together.

The barrier deployed along the walls of Daedalus was a perfect example of it.

According to the common sense of magicians, to apply a defensive enhancement to a 4 storey building like the guild building, it would require 5 rank 3 magicians to work for a whole week.

But Kurono said that he would do it alone that too in a single night.

It was natural for Mozrun to be doubtful. He felt it would be amazing if he could cover half of the building in 3 days.

“It’ll be fine. If it’s just enhancing the walls, I’ll manage it somehow.”

But Mozrun did not speak his doubts. He decided to believe in his leader’s strong words and see how things turn out.

“I’ll look forward to it, work hard Boss Kurono.”

While waving his skeletal hand, Mozrun left.

Kurono who was left alone spread his arms towards the black magic circle.

“—amazing.”

He could instantly feel black magical energy activating just from touching.

“Let’s do this—[Blackening].”

To enhance his weapons and swords, as well as use them without touching was [Blackening]. It was a magic that he had learnt even before he left that facility. He had a lot of memories of using this magic in various situations like in his fight against Sarii, or when he opened the treasure box etc. And probably, enhancing this whole building will also become another one of those memories.

The most common effect of Kurono’s blackening was the enhancement of the material.

Basically, just as how he strengthened his swords, he wanted to enhance and strengthen the whole wooden structure through blackening.

But, to complete blackening he had to cover the object completely with his magical energy. And the bigger the object, the more the consumption of magic will be.

And this time, the object was not a small box or sword, but a 4 storey giant building. The magical energy consumption will be higher than anything, even higher than the time when the cursed hatchet evolved.

(“But, if I do this slowly through the whole night, I’ll definitely be successful.”

After weighing the consumption rate with his energy recovery rate, it was certainly possible but only theoretically.

Even if the black magical energy recovered with time, the concentration and patience required to use it continuously will definitely fall.

(“Basically, it depends on my guts!!”)

Thus, Kurono’s long night had started.



Chapter 91 - Occupation of Irz

Although there were irregularities like the annihilation of Kievan's squad and the scout troop, the crusaders finally occupied Irz on the 25th of the month of Shinyou.

The main army moved only after long and detailed reconnaissance due to which it took so much time.

"They have completely escaped."

It was only natural. Although Norz had no proof that the villagers had all evacuated and moving towards Spada, he had still predicted it more or less.

Norz had further predicted even worse things.

"Not just the villagers, provisions, commodities, anything valuable have already been lost."

His aide, Sister Sylvia's report only substantiated it.

In the first place, it was clear that the adventurers were using Scorched Earth tactics just from the fact that the adventurer guild had been burned down.

"Tch, damned demons, trying to be insolent."

Norz, who had experience in various battles back in the republic, was well aware of what such tactics will have.

But even then, he realized that the current situation was only worth cursing a few times.

"But, it's not a big problem. We have the resources collected from the previous villages. Have them quickly carry it all here."

Scorched Earth tactics could only show their full effect when the enemy has no way of procuring supplies at site.

At that point, Norz had no reason to worry since they had sufficient supplies gained from previous villages.

"Then, let's prepare according to that."

Norz was expecting a few words of sarcasm so he felt uncomfortable from the obedient agreement he got.

“You’re unusually thoughtful today Sister Sylvia.”

“Fighting is your role. If governing a village is not required then my job is only to prepare supplies.”

It was her usual cold attitude but her words did have some modesty.

“Hou, is that so?”

“ee, that is so. I won’t speak unnecessarily so please command freely.”

“I’ll do that.”

Unexpectedly she did know her place.

She had been uselessly speaking all the time, but now that a battle has become inevitable, not a single word of opposition came from her.

After all she must have curried the Cardinal’s favour with her cleverness and womanly weapons, now that an actual battle is at hand, she’s nothing but a girl who can follow orders.

That was how Norz interpreted Sylvia’s attitude change.

Leaving aside whether it was correct or not, the current situation was delightful for Norz. There was no way they’d lose to demons but if his aide had kept on talking uselessly, it would have spoiled the cheers of victory.

“fu, tomorrow I’ll be able to rampage after a long time.”

“Tomorrow?”

“What? Don’t you know that those demons are lying in wait at the Kuar village? There will obviously be a battle tomorrow.”

Don’t you know even something like that? Sighing as if implying that, Norz further spoke.

“Kuar is the only village in this region with walls of stone. If they are going to gain time for the villagers to run away then obviously they’ll chose this village that has the strongest defence.”

“But, according to the reports of the scout troops, there were no signs of enemy in Kuar.”

“.....What?”

He ended up asking her again.

“There’s no one at Kuar.”

He felt embarrassed but soon after his thoughts moved into a different direction.

“Wait, does that mean that the army and the adventurers ran away with the villagers?—fuhaha such cowards!!”

Since they had destroyed Keiva’s squad and scout troops, Norz was thinking that the demons will fight head on.

But after attacking the scout troops, if they ran away then that meant that there was no ambush at Kuar.

“Could it be they thought they could stop us with that simple attack and this half-assed scorched earth tactics, no, maybe they had a falling out among comrades? Well whatever. If the demons have all run away, there is no need to be vigilant. Let’s make the army advance quickly. We can’t let even a single demon run away!!”

Norz had become passionate to start pursuing but Sylvia remained in her usual low tension and continued her report.

“I’m changing the topic but a sealed letter for you has arrived. The sender is Bishop Gregorius.”

“It can’t be an order to return, right?”

Although Kievan’s squad had been annihilated, it was not at a level where they would be ordered to return. In the first place Gregorius himself was in Daedalus, but he had not sent any report.

Norz who had occupied villages one after the other, there was no way he would have any problem or dissatisfaction.

After thinking of various possibilities, Norz removed the seal looked at the contents.

“.....Reinforcements?”

Norz unintentionally muttered.

“Is it a request for reinforcements?” (Sylvia)

“It’s the opposite. He sent reinforcements to us. Here read.”

Sylvia took the letter and spoke after reading it once.

“I saw ominous black shadows towards the place where Norz Priest Head is going, is what is written. Is this some kind of a code?”

“Don’t know, probably he means those words in a literal sense. Bishop Gregorius is a suspicious self proclaimed [Prophet], you didn’t know?”

Norz called his current direct superior ‘suspicious’. Even in this world there is no such thing as an accurate future prediction. Still, calling himself a [prophet] will obviously lead to doubts.

“So is this a [Prediction]?”

“He’s the same as a back-street fortune teller. Anyone can make wild guesses and prove a few true.”

But, since he never clearly gave any prediction randomly, he was able to reach a position as high as a bishop.

“Rather than [prediction] it is more of an [estimation]. Basically, he is a crackpot and calls his estimates as predictions, though I don’t know why.”

“ ‘Ominous Black Shadows’ is what is written here but does that mean that the Bishop has sensed some kind of threat and that is why he sent reinforcements? That’s the only probable explanation.”

“umu, but.....”

Norz thought.

In the letter, neither the details of the reinforcement sent nor their numbers, which squad, nothing has been written.

It should be about 1000 soldiers but what he could not understand was the reason behind this timing to send reinforcements.

If there really is a force that could threaten Norz's army, then it must be either a large army of undead or a black dragon had appeared.

But this vague [prediction] could not be interpreted. The true identity of the 'shadow' could be a sudden accident or a revolt in the squads as well.

After he had thought that far, Norz didn't feel that this reinforcement was truly meant for helping him.

Worst case, this reinforcement would mix with his squad, and after the western region of Daedalus was captured completely, they would assassinate him and the achievement would be taken by the Bishop.

In that case, the Bishop will definitely say 'Norz Priest Head fought those despicable demons till the end and lost his noble life' and cry for him. But the dead cannot be rewarded materially so his superior, that is the Bishop himself, would reap the awards.

".....At the current stage, reinforcements are not needed. If another squad came, then don't merge with them and don't let them move further than Irz."

"Yes, i understand."

Yes, Norz could complete the mission to capture western Daedalus without any problems. Even if he was not assassinated, he'll be troubled if the achievements were divided due to stupidly accepting these reinforcements.

Bishop Gregorius was his direct superior in the Crusaders but that didn't mean he could be trusted.

This reinforcement sent due to the cryptic [prediction], Norz interpreted that it was but one of the trickery prevalent inside the Crusaders.

"fun, always making trouble uselessly."

Norz cursed his superior without hiding it even a bit.

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Cyprus Mercenaries that moved along with Norz's main troops had also stationed in Irz by the 25th.

Ai snuck and looked around the village while avoiding the eyes of the soldiers so that she doesn't get yelled at.

After moving around, she sat down randomly and took out a [portable food] out of her pouch that was made of unknown ingredients and started eating.

"Disgusting, couldn't they have put a little more flavour?"

It looked like a chocolate bar but as Ai said, it had no taste and had texture like hard bread.

It was a thing that made people doubtful to eat even when extremely hungry.

"Tsumiki, wanna eat?"

The black cat sitting around her legs turned and ran away.

"You don't have to reject me so badly....."

Ai glared towards the direction the cat ran away.

"yoo, what are you doing in such a place, Ai?"

"uuwa, this shit food just became shittier."

Ai's displeasure was clearly seen in her words.

"aa, that's really shitty, you're amazing to have actually eaten that."

"You were the one who distributed it to everyone right?"

"Really? Can't remember."

Ai looked away as Cyprus started to guffaw.

Cyprus was accompanied by two women mercs as guards.

In contrast to Cyprus who wore no armour, the women were clad in thick steel armour.

Since those 2 were wearing helmets, their expressions could not be seen. Ai ignored them and spoke.

“Don’t give something disgusting like this ever again. If all food became like this, it’ll start a rebellion. Or rather, I’ll be the first to kill you. I gently and slowly stab your heart with a knife and kill you.”

“About that, well, it seems like those clever bastards burned every eatable thing in the village, so it’s difficult to find something good to eat.”

“Eh? No way!”

“Really. You also saw things burnt here and there right?”

No matter how much Cyprus said irresponsible things, Ai wasn’t able to deny his words just this time.

Ai knew how much provision her mercenary group carried, so she also knew that they needed to supply their reserves every now and then.

And if they are unable to procure it locally, they would definitely run out of their current stock within 1 week.

“Then ask the Crusaders to share some with us. They should have some surplus right?”

“Not possible. Bowing to that filthy old man and asking for help is impossible for me. My pride won’t allow me to.”

Ai knew that this man could have his own merc group starve just to maintain his own appearance, that too without any ill intentions. And it was really true as well.

“Deal with it. I still have my share of food, the tasty ones.”

“And for everyone else?”

“Portable food.”

“Die. You should really die.”

Maybe because they reacted towards Ai’s half-serious words, the two guards put their hands on their swords.

Ai, who was sitting, could see their expressionless faces from beneath the helm.

Ai thought that those faint expressions looked more like those of a slave rather than a soldier.

“You’ll be fine with portable food. As long as you have water along with it, you can keep on living. So everyone should get along and eat it. I won’t eat it though.”

Whether he realized the reaction of the 2 or not, Cyprus continued speaking in his usual joking style due to which the women did not draw their swords.

“Rather than that, Ai you could just eat with me. Why don’t you come to my place tonight?”

“haa?”

“I have lots of alcohol and cannabis as well. It’ll be fun!”

Disgusted from Cyprus gaze that was licking all over her, she gave the words of refusal.

“It’s fun only inside your head. If you’re starving for women then go look for someone else.”

“But only Ai’s left among our group and I’m bored of these ones. I can’t lay my hands on Sister and there aren’t any demons here.”

“I don’t care.”

Ai, who was at her limit for talking with him, put the last bit of food inside her mouth and stood up.

“For the time being, as a captain, do something about the food.”

“weeii.” (T/N: half-assed sound for acceptance lol)

With even glancing again towards Cyprus, Ai left the place.

She hadn’t decided whether to return back to the camp or to roam around more, but for the time being, she wanted to get away from this disgusting man.

“aa, Ai-chan really is difficult to tempt.” (Cyprus)

Cyprus spoke looking bored. As he turned around, he raised his fist overhead and struck it directly on the face of the woman standing beside him.

The dull sound of the hard fist striking flesh and bone resounded.

Without raising even a single scream, she fell down as her nose bled. The other who did not get hit didn't even seem to care about it.

It was normal to hit them. There was no reason behind it. They were not allowed to even ask for a reason.

"aa fuck fuck, why are there no demons here? Don't run away, it's troublesome."

He struck the fallen woman with her boots countless times.

As if crushing an insect, he showed no mercy or restraint.

"Seriously, what should I do? I won't get either food or women for some time— should I keep on advancing— No, that won't work, that would be dangerous after all. Shit, no choice but to be patient."

After grumbling, he finally raised his head.

"Well whatever. I'll just give some randomly. The food will hold till we catch up to those demons at least."

Chapter 92 - Alchemist

26th of the month of Shinyou, Morning.

“.....What the hell?”

Currently, the Alsace village was congested with the people evacuating towards Spada.

In the central plaza, many tents had been set up that made it look like the camp site of the Daedalus army.

“It doesn’t look like the Natsugoshi festival. What the hell happened while I was on a quest?.....”

He was the rank 1 adventurer of Alsace village, Simon. 1 week ago, he had secluded himself at the foot of the Gallahad mountain ranges and finally returned after completing a quest to collect medicinal herbs.

But, when he returned, he found the village filled with anxious people with a negative aura.

There must have been some kind of an unexpected emergency. He thought that but since he had a shy personality, he decided to directly head towards the guild rather than question the people there.

“Eh!? What’s that? That guild has become totally black!?!”

He reached the guild but he was once again received another surprise.

1 week ago, when he was leaving, the guild was definitely painted white but now it was as black as the dark night itself.

“Coating work.....there’s no way.....”

In front of the jet black guild, he became a bit hesitant but if he didn’t enter he won’t be able to get the reward either, so he had no other choice.

With a doubtful expression, Simon put his hand on the door and opened it slowly.

“uwa.....”

The lobby of the guild was filled with armed adventurers.

Although it was a normal scene inside the guild but what was abnormal was the sheer number of adventurers. There were just too many of them.

It was like a guild of an urban city. Thinking that, Simon moved towards the counter.

But he received a surprise for the third time.

“The counter is closed!?”

The counter won't close until an official emergency quest had been declared.

A question mark appeared over Simon's head as he was unable to make any sense of the situation.

“Why.....rather, what should I do.....”

When he looked around, there were only never before seen adventurers.

No, Simon, who had come here only a few days back as a solo, he never really had anyone he could talk to anyway in Alsace.

“Just what happened to the village and the guild??”

What should he do next, how could he get the reward for his quest, what was happening right now, as he thought all these things, Simon stood stupefied in one corner of the lobby.

“You, over there.”

Simon who was thinking while hanging his head down, heard a voice from above.

“Eh?”

As he raised his eyes, the one who stood there was a man dressed from head to toe in complete black clothes.

He was also a human but was much taller than him. Since he was wearing a robe, he must be a magician but his muscles made him look like a warrior instead.

Although he had a sharp nose and a well maintained body, his expression was extremely sharp, and the man gave an immense amount of intimidation.

("Uwa, he looks like the type I'm bad against.....")

He was not prejudiced. Since Simon had a short stature, he had the experience of being scorned by men of the same age for that.

Especially those who were blessed with a better physique used to make fun of him more.

But, suppressing his trauma in his heart, he replied with a monotone cold voice.

"What is it, Onii-san?" (T/N: Onii-san can be used in this sense as well when someone tries to give respect to a person only a few years older. Actual relation isn't necessary. Tho Kurono is probably the younger one here lol.)

"I haven't seen you before. Did you return from a quest just now?"

"Yes....."

He replied coldly to the man.

("He talked to me at least, so I should ask the current situation from him as well.")

Simon thought that.

He wanted to ask for an explanation but the man spoke first.

"The thing you're holding, is that a gun?"

Those words made Simon widen his eyes in surprise.

".....How do you know that?"

.

.

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(POV change to Kurono)

After completing the blackening of guild successfully, everyone, especially Mossan,

“Amazing boss Kurono! I knew you could do it. I believed in you till the end!!”

-Kept on praising me. After that I returned to the lobby.

My body wasn't weak enough to get tired with just one all-nighter but due to continuously using magic, I was still mentally tired.

I was about to return to my room and take a 1 hour break but,

“Th, That's —“

As it suddenly came into my view, shockwaves ran through my brain.

The one I was looking at was a single Elf. I clearly make that out due to the characteristic long pointed ears.

He had grey short hair, emerald big eyes like Lily and had a cute girly face, wait, is it a guy?

He was wearing a dark blue coat and leather boots and trousers. I could make out from his attire that he was probably a guy.

If he was wearing a skirt like the 3 sisters of [Three Hunting Princesses] I would definitely thought that he was a girl.

Anyway, I wasn't shocked because I fell in love with that boy-girl but because of the weapon he(?) was holding.

“——Isn't that a gun!?”

That long iron cylinder was definitely like that of a gun.

When that boy-girl looked the other way, I could also see the grip as well as the trigger. I'm pretty sure now.

It looked like a shotgun, no, it looked more like a Rifle without the stock.

I did see some Crusaders holding bowguns but I never thought I would see guns in this other world.

I became high with tension even after the all-nighter by just seeing that. Of course to avoid suspicion of the other Adventurers, my face was still in a poker face from outside.

“I’m curious now, wait, couldn’t that gun become a major power for us?”

In any case, since an emergency quest has been made, he will also become a part of our alliance anyway. I should talk to him now.

I moved towards him(?) who was standing in one corner of the lobby looking somewhat lonely.

Damn, I’m a bit nervous now. Why does it feel like I’m hitting on some girls in a city? Not that I have ever done it actually.

“You, over there.”

Calmly and normally, I called him.

“Eh?”

He raised his head and looked towards me with upturned eyes.

Uoh, now that I look closely, that face is really cute. I am changing it from he(?) to a she(?).

“What is it, Onii-san?”

Were my weird thoughts exposed? She answered with a monotone cold voice while releasing a really rejecting aura.(T/N: yep, kurono uses ‘she’ here.)

I really am shocked from that clearly super cold reaction. Well, my eyes have always been bad and I am also wearing a full black looking robe as well. Anyone would get a bit vigilant against a suspicious looking person, right?

Let’s leave it at that.

“I haven’t seen you before. Did you return from a quest just now?”

“Yes.....”

So she really was an adventurer.

That means, she doesn’t know the current situation. It’s natural after all. Some who returned yesterday were also the same as her.

But, she really is giving off a seriously gloomy aura.

I'm being unskilful here. Even though I haven't gotten to the main topic, the next words will definitely end the conversation if it goes on like this.

I need to ask her about the gun quickly.

"The thing you're holding, is that a gun?"

".....How do you know that?"

Was my question such a surprise? Her cute eyes opened wide as she looked at me.

"Do people not know about it normally?"

"Unless it's a real weapon maniac, nobody knows about guns. 'Normally' you said, is your common sense normal?"

In just a few seconds after meeting, my common sense is being doubted already.

Well, since I'm not from this world, it's a fact that I still haven't grasped the common sense of this world as of yet. So it can't be helped.

"It was normal where I lived."

It sounds like an excuse but it's true.

From the common sense of my world, everyone knows about guns after all. Especially guys like me, though I'm still not at the level of being called a gun otaku.

Leaving that aside, from her words it's certain that it's actually a gun.

But, even though there are guns, I wonder why they have not become popular yet? Is it because magic is more convenient? Or maybe because it's too costly? Well, it might be the start of an era where it starts getting popularized from here onwards.

"Anyway, I'm really interested in your gun. Can you show it to me?"

"My gun is a normal lump of steel and not some magical mechanism rod. It's not what magician Onii-san is expecting."

I see, there must be rods that look like guns as well.

My [Black Ballista Replica] also shows the same effects like a gun if it was shaped like a gun.

Rather than that,

“If it doesn’t use magic, that means it is an actual gun that shoots lead balls with gunpowder, right? I want to see that ‘real’ gun.”

“Onii-san....why do you know even that?”

Huh? Didn’t I hear the same thing just a while ago?

Her surprised expression also came for the second time.

“I created this gun that uses gunpowder instead of magical energy to shoot bullets. I have never told anyone about this structure so why do you know that!”

Wait a second, this girl just said that she created it.

“Wait wait, I want to confirm something but those guns that the weapon maniacs know about are all gun-shaped Rods?”

“.....That’s right.”

“And, you created this gun that fires bullets without magic. Could it be that you compounded the gunpowder by yourself as well?”

“It’s not something as amazing as compounding but, yes. That’s why there’s no way anyone else knows about guns that uses bullets. No wait—could it be, there are already such guns at Onii-san’s homeland....?”

In front of her who had started muttering to herself, I got an even bigger shock that the time I saw the gun.

“A genius.”

The history behind guns wasn’t something shallow. The creation of matchlock, invention of gunpowder was made through various trials and errors.

To create that from nothing, that too alone, was impossible.

No, she must have gotten some kind of a hint.

Even so, in this world where gunpowder doesn't even exist, to have created a gun alone,

"You're a genius!"

Yes, there's no other way to describe this.

"O, Onii-san?"

Right now, I might be looking at a great inventor in front of me.

"Amazing, this is amazing, please show me that gun, I beg of you!!"

"uu.....if you go that far, fine....."

Maybe she had been pulled by my vigour; she was showing a troubled face but I didn't really care about that right now.

She timidly handed the gun to me.

"Thank you!"

As I took it, I could feel the heaviness of the iron in my hands.

I had held model guns but this the first time I held an actual one. But somehow I know from this weight that it's a real gun.

"Does it have bullets inside right now?"

"No way, I have removed them for now. Nothing will happen even if you pull the trigger. It's just a pipe of iron right now."

Then, there's not a chance for an accidental discharge either so I can observe it with relief.

"It feels like a hunting gun—"

It's appearance is that of a hunting gun without the stock. But after matching it's appearance with the ones in my mind, I found a gun that matched it better.

"A Contender." (T/N: It's the name of a gun. Google it. Kiritsugu uses it in Fate Zero.)

It was a single shot pistol developed by the America's Thompson. It looks really similar to it.

But, since it's meant for her use, the grip is somewhat smaller. It looks more like a compact version of it.

It looks like a hunting gun but its barrel is long. Even longer than the Contender probably. Though I haven't seen an actual one.

"But, its structure is more or less the same."

Since there's neither a bolt nor a magazine, it needs to be loaded after every single shot.

As expected since she created it alone, compared to the current level of guns, it only has the minimum mechanism needed to shoot the bullet.

Except the barrel, the interior doesn't even have the smooth rifling. It must fire round bullets like the matchlock guns. Since there's a red shiny stone on the firing hammer, it must be used as an ignition, basically it's a flint rock type, or something close to that.

That means, gunpowder and the bullet are loaded separately? I'll need to ask the details.

On pulling the bullet, a *gakin* sound could be heard.

I feel moved. That sound is really cool.

"How do you reload? Do you insert the bullet from the barrel?"

"That's how I wanted to do, but right now——"

As I returned the gun, she set it up with familiar hands, and with a *gashan* sound, the barrel snapped open.

"Opening from middle type!?! Damn, so cool!!"

"I know right!? It's really cool!!"

By the way, the contender is also the same type.

Rather than that, I think I just connected with her just now, with this girl whose name I don't even know——oh right,

“I hadn’t introduced myself yet.”

“Eh, un.”

I took out my guild card from my pocket and showed it to her.

“I’m Kurono, nice to meet you.”

“.....Simon.”

We named ourselves, and exchanged our cards.

Name- Simon, Rank 1, Class- Alchemist, is what was written on her card.

“Alchemist?”

I saw this class for the first time.

I could understand if it was a magician of fire or darkness but what kind of a class was an alchemist?

“Onii-san, you don’t know about Alchemists?”

“Those who turn things into gold?”

“Yeah, without magic.”

“.....you can do it?”

“No way. If it was possible, gold won’t be used as money anymore.”

I guess that was obvious. After all the value of gold is absolute no matter which world it is.

You can’t create gold even with magic.

“Alchemists are researchers that work on things other than magic. Not everyone researches a way to create gold.”

“I see, other than magic.....”

That means, it’s the same as my world, something like an ancestor to scientists.

If that’s the case, then I am even more curious.

It could be that Simon might have invented something else that is the same as my world as well.

For someone who has been swung around by magic all the time after being summoned, I want to see something more scientific after a long time.

“Does that mean you have a research laboratory as well?”

“It’s not something that amazing but there is a need to have a place to do experiments so I have borrowed a lodge nearby.”

“If possible, can you show me there?”

“Eeh!? Th, that’s.....”

“Ah sorry. Could it be the lab has lots of secrets? Then there’s no need to—“

No, that’s not it. After all, no one other than me can understand it anyway, but, it’s really cramped so it’s difficult to bring someone else as well.....”

I see, so the reason is a replacement of “ My room is dirty so you’re not allowed to enter it alright!?”

But still, I really don’t have time right now.

I might find something there that might help me against the Crusaders so I need her cooperation no matter what.

Wait, I haven’t really explained the situation to her at all either.

“I’m changing the topic a little but actually an emergency quest has been issued. This village is facing a critical condition.”

“Ah, right, I wanted to know about that as well! What’s happening in the village right now? There are a lot of adventurers and the counter is closed. Also my reward—“

“I get it I get it, I’ll explain everything so let’s talk while we walk towards your lab.”

“Eh, is going to my place already decided?!”

“Sorry but in the end, that’s what we’ll do.”

I just realized it but, this girl is really good at Tsukkomis. I feel like playing around with her a bit more.

Lily is just a child, Fiona is an airhead, I really had no chance to joke around. And now I get these reactions from Simon-chan.

It feels the same as when I was in my literature club and had a conversation with a junior boy from the Illustration club to make some illustrations for my own light novel.

That guy was also child faced and it was difficult to tell whether he was a guy or a girl. It can't be helped that Simon-chan's overlapped with him

Damn, I feel like crying a bit due to happiness and homesickness.

"Why are you being moved to tears Onii-san?"

"No, I just remembered my home for a bit."

"Was there something nostalgic during our conversation?"

That's right, I don't have the time to be swept with nostalgia. If I keep playing the idiot(boke), I'll be able to relieve my stress but the conversation won't move any further.

I need to quickly explain the situation and get her cooperation and also think about how to use guns in actual battle.

"Anyway, I need your strength right now!"

".....Is that a joke?"

"No, I'm really serious this time."

Maybe because I joked around too much, the trust in my words seems to have plummeted.

"My bad. I think you'll get it once I'm done explaining."

"fun, well fine. Then shall we go?"

"Yeah."

Oh, I needed to tell the others that I'm going out for a bit as well.

If the leader disappeared suddenly, they'll think I ran away.

I clapped loudly and called the adventurers.

“Oi, everyone, listen for a second.”

The adventurers in the lobby all reacted to my voice instantly and looked here.

“Wait, Onii-san what are you——“

“I’m going out for a bit. I’ll be back before noon. After that we’ll practice as planned so be ready as required.”

“”””Roger.””””

After hearing their reply, I and Simon-chan left the guild.

“.....Onii-san, just who are you?”

“I showed you the guild card right? Rank 1 adventurer and a black magician.”

I’m also the leader of the Adventurer alliance but I’ll leave the explanation for later.

Chapter 93 – Assault! Simon’s Laboratory (1)

“I see.....so it had turned into something troublesome.”

In my hands, is the bulletin of the emergency quest that I got from Onii-san. I understood somewhat about the situation because of it.

If I had been secluding myself in mountains for 1 more week, I would’ve encountered the dreadful army called as Crusader.

“Right now the embankment is under construction for the purpose of being a protective wall.”

In front of the area where Onii-san pointed his finger, there were beast men and dwarves erecting fence of woods and wrapping some sort of iron wire around it.

From the looks of it, the villagers are preparing themselves for fighting even while knowing the situation.

“We will stop Crusaders here, at worst they will come here day after tomorrow.”

“Then, is it alright to be hanging out with me? You’re leader right?”

“And so, I want the guns. They are amazing and powerful weapons, after all.”

“It ain’t that special. It can be repelled by any monster with somewhat hard scales or skin and it’s attack is also lame compared to any lower grade explosion magic. And if one doesn’t know how to use it, then the chanting is more fast than reloading. I doubt I will need to say about chantless magic then.”

A normal bullet can inflict damage up to monsters of rank 2.

Even inside rank 2 monsters, there are those with strong scales and skin, and there are those with increased defense abilities due to magic.

And not only monsters, An armor enchanted with defense magic can easily repel the bullets. Furthermore, a lower grade defense magic might be able to block 1 shot or 2 shots.

To break those defenses, higher grade magic or martial arts will be needed. That’s why, a person like me with neither martial arts or magic can ever

become a rank 2 adventurer.

Though not much time had passed since I registered, but I can only think of me being rank 1 even after 10 years.

“Indeed, it may be disadvantageous against monsters. But gun is more reliable in killing a human being.”

Onii-san’s eyes became scary when he said that.

He is definitely hating the enemy that will be coming soon. Even I, said to be oblivious of human emotions, can feel it.

“Enemy’s attire is chainmail under a thick surcoat. They don’t have any armor with defense magic. Therefore, gun is the best choice. Humans are weak than other races. They get hit once and they can’t fight, so a gun capable of wounding them is perfect.”

I’ve never shot any human, but have shot some goblins. Just like Onii-san said, a race without that sort of skin or scales will be able to go down in just one shot.

But it can’t rapid-fire, and I’m a solo adventurer so I doubt if I will be able to fight against a crowd.

“And this time, we have the vanguards, right?”

Onii-san speaks as if he saw through me.

“I want you shoot down the enemies that will come from the riverside, can you do it?”

“The river is pretty near. So I can shoot them even while being on the other shore.”

“.....Really?”

Onii-san makes a surprised face, oops, is he thinking that I’m lying.

“If one can’t do something like that, then guns aren’t suited for them. And bullets are more pricy than arrows, if I keep on missing my targets then I’ll go bankrupt.”

Arrows are sold in bundles at every village, but bullets need to be order made and so it needs more money.

“Is that so, then can you show me, no, can you even let me shoot ?”

Onii-san makes an excited expression. Really, though being a magician he loves guns. He is weird.

“Ah, if you’re worrying about money of bullets. I will give you, will this suffice?”

Onii-san throws a single coin. I in a panic catch it so it won’t drop.

“1 Gold!? I can’t take this much!”

“Just that it, think of it as prior investment.”

“What?”

“Don’t mind too much about it.”

“If you say that much, then it’s fine.....”

I don’t have any reason to refuse, and it won’t break from just pulling the trigger. This was made to be unbreakable even if used pretty rashly.

I quickly reload the gun, and hand it over to Onii-san.

“Whoa.....”

Onii-san’s eyes are sparkling. He really is a child.

“From here, yeah, that tree over there is inside it’s attack range.”

I point my finger towards a tree standing on the roadside 150 metres forward.

It is big, but it’s trunk pretty thick around that of a human skull. It’s very good for experimenting.

“great, then here I go—”

The smell of dry gunpowder floats.

The gun definitely did shootout the loaded bullet, but where did the bullet went is unconfirmed.

“I missed. This is difficult.”

“That’s how it is if not familiar to it.”

“That’s right, indeed—”

Onii-san moves his hand not holding the gun forward. Magic starts swirling around his hands and a black bullet materializes.

That bullet was not like the round one I used. It was long and arrow along with a pointed tip and edge.

Huh, maybe a pointed edge and tip will increase the power of a bullet—

While I was thinking that, the black bullet is fired with an explosion sound and in a ultra high speed.

Bakin The sound of the trunk of tree breaking reaches the ears.

“As expected, if not familiar I can’t hit it.”

“Onii-san, the one right now”

“It’s my original magic. I made an offensive magic with the image of a gun.”

‘It doesn’t has barrel neither trigger so it doesn’t look very cool’ while saying that Onii-san laughed.

Onii-san if you have a magic like that, why would you need gun.

The gun I have made through a lot of troubles, is nothing of a big deal to a magician like Onii-san who can just make it in any quantity.

I really hate magic. From the point of view of a person who can’t use it, there’s no other thing more sly than this.

“Now, show me how to use it.”

“yeah”

Let’s stop it, I don’t envy the magic. After all now I’m an alchemist who doesn’t rely on magic.

I reload the bullet in gun, just by doing this process my concentration rises.

After setting up the gun, there only the enemy in front of it.

A target at this distance is easy. Even if won’t hit at pin point, I can still aim at it and shoot it.

Without even letting 1 second pass after setting up the gun. I pull the trigger.

Shoot & Hit. It’s only natural to hit after it’s fired.

“You’re great! It hit on one try!”

“N-Not really, anyone can do this once familiar with this. You’re the first one to praise me after shooting with a gun. Normally people shrug their shoulders while saying “Ah, so what?” and like that.”

If it’s just hitting the target, even Onii-san could do it with magic.

“Hey, will it be able shoot if I throw this in air.”

“Eh, What do you mean?”

Before I knew it, in Onii-san’s right hands a black round object was made by magic.

It’s near 30 centimetres in length. Is he saying of hitting it in the air. It seems interesting.

I reload the bullets and once again set up the gun.

“Throw it.”

“Kay, then here I go.”

Buun While cutting through the air, the black disk flies at the speed of an arrow.

The black disk makes a slight curve due to the wind attacking it and slowly increases its distance.

Hitting a moving target is more difficult than hitting unmoving target. It is still easy to hit because it can't make sudden movement like monsters.

I pull the trigger, sound of fire resounds and the black disk in air smashes into pieces.

“You even excel at clay-pigeon shooting too! You have, without a doubt, the talent for sniping.”

“Ah, th-that.....clay-pigeon shooting is what.....”

“Hahaha, don't be shy.”

While laughing in good mood, Onii-san violently strikes my shoulders.

I-It kinda hurts, you know. And suddenly Onii-san starts patting my head.

“Please s-stop it!!”

I realise my always stiff facial expression is loosened and I'm also laughing.

Thats right, this is first time someone has praised me so straightforwardly and has accepted me.

Chapter 94 – Assault! Simon’s Laboratory (2)

Standing there was not a cabin or shed but more like a storeroom. [ET: Remember he wanted to go to her laboratory.]

“C-come in.....”

Simon opened the door with an embarrassed expression and invited me in.

“So this is the laboratory, huh”

“That’s right! Something like this is my laboratory you got a problem!? It can’t be helped at all! A rank 1 adventurer ain’t got money to buy a spacious room!”

“No, I know about that so calm down.”

I now understand why we crossed the garden instead of entering through the front door of this lodging and come to this place. So this is Simon’s lodging room cum laboratory.

Well it would be bad if one were to use the guest room of lodging for something other than sleeping or resting. And with the income of a rank 1 adventurer acquiring a spacious room for sleeping and work is impossible. I understand that Simon sleeps here and does research. I also agree on it but still,

“Pitiful.....”

I spoke my feelings in a low voice so as she can’t hear. [ET: Till the time it ain’t proved Simon is a boy I won’t change she/her/herself to get that.]

“Sit down” (Simon)

She pulls a chair of woods from under the desk she might be using a lot and offers it me.

There is no other chair and so Simon sat on the bed.

Hey! Now that I look at it, that is just some wooden boxes lined up and a sheet is spread on them. Where the hell is bed then!

It’s really bad, Shimon-**chan** looks like the protagonist from Unlucky Human that premieres on World’s Masterpieces Show. Really pitiful.

“Onii-san, you just thought of something rude just now, right?”

“No, I never did! Still, this place does has the feeling of an laboratory—”
After inspecting the room, the first impression that comes is “Damn full of things.”

On the desk there are many thick books which look like old-fashioned dictionary lined one upon another. Various tools are scattered too.

There are also mechanism for making tools, a suspicious brights coloured liquid, raw materials like fangs and scales of monsters. These all were spread on the desk, table, shelves, floor, everywhere.

Yep, it does has the feel of laboratory. Almost to the extent that it coincides with my fantasy images.

This really is the laboratory of an alchemist! I can say that without a doubt, well I don't know how other alchemists are though.

“—I don't have much time, so let's get right to the main point.”

“Eh, Yeah”

Maybe I released a somewhat serious atmosphere, Simon showed an expression of nervousness.

Indeed, the talk from here on is me speaking as the leader of adventurer alliance.

“First of all I need to confirm one thing. Will you accept the emergency quest?”

“Of course, I'm also an adventurer, and I have no objection in accepting the request.”

Simon replies immediately without any hesitation.

“This time is pretty dangerous, you know, no one can guarantee your safety.”

“That isn't something you say to an adventurer. If it was someone else, that person would definitely snap. But still, I will take that as an warning.”

“Sorry, i just wanted to confirm.”

Most adventurers follow after strong people, but Simon didn't feel like that to me. And she also seems like someone who never fought at front lines, So I wanted to confirm her determination.

“And so, I want Simon to help me with something, unfortunately we don't have much time so I don't know whether it will be done or not—”

“What is it?”

“I want you to make a machine gun” [ET: Yaay now we are talking.]

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Lily and Fiona came down to the first floor lobby through stairs as if they are really good sisters.

“Creating Potions tires the eyes.” (Fiona)

“Yep, and that so repeatedly~”

After completing the compounding which included staring game and weighing to split the potions in accurate quantity, both came down for resting and eating food.

By the way, the way Lily compounds is through measuring by the eye. She somehow compounds the raw material while playing a staring game with them.

“Thank you for your hard work, will you take a breather from now?”

The one who calls out to them is the dark magician skeleton, Mozrun.

For the republic it may be someone who might become a subjugation target as soon as he is spotted, but Fiona is already familiar with his appearance resembling that of grim reaper.

“Yes, we got hungry”

“Ahahaha, it’s always that, don’t finish up our all provisions before the fight.”

“I’ll try to.”

“Hey Where is kurono?”

Lily restlessly surveys the lobby, but she couldn’t find the black tall figure. The leader Kurono is a lot busy.

If it was someone like Vulcan, he would’ve silently waited for the enemy to come, but Kurono who is giving his all in preparations and is the busiest person here.

Stationing of adventurers, coordination between parties, construction progress, securing the goods and more is all the work Kurono needs to complete.

Due to that Kurono is not waiting in the guild but is moving around the whole village.

“Maybe he is in Conference Room”

“Ah, wrong. Boss went out some while ago.”

Mozurun overturns Fiona’s prediction.

“So that’s how it is”

“Eeh, where did he go?”

Mozurun kindly and thoroughly answers to Lily asking a question in a childish manner.

“He went out with a really beautiful elf girl. Right now he might be having some pleasure time. Well he had been working a lot, this much of breather is allow—”

“Not allowed”

““!?””

Just as Fiona and Mozurun sensed a vast amount magic swirling,

“I won’t allow any of that.”

In front of their eyes, was Lily who returned to her original form.

The cute loveable face of the child is no more alive, the only things that remains is a young girl with a beautiful face seeming like a Noh Mask.

“.....Lily-san?”

On Lily’s sudden change, Fiona breaks out in cold sweat.

She senses the white light magic which will result in big explosion if touched.

Thanks to that, Mozurun is now trembling with fear of getting purified by her light.

“I will bring Kurono back”

“E—” (Fiona)

Their eyes meet, but in her eye Fiona is not all reflected. No doubt she is seeing ‘something’ in far distance.

Before Fiona could answer, Lily was no more in her line of sight.

“.....It would be good if it doesn’t turn into something troublesome.”

“Boss, please, please come back in once piece.....”

Fiona and Mozrun saw Lily off who went out in super high speed, or rather, they couldn't even see her off.



Chapter 95 - First Time Jealousy

Affair. If someone were to ask if this word would apply to Kurono's behaviour, the answer would be NO.

Kurono treats Lily as his partner and puts a tremendous trust in her, and treats her more importantly than anything else in this different world, but there is no advancement in terms of romance.

If you were to look from the start, he would hug her, pat her head gently, and has even more skinship than a normal couple, but they were not lovers.

That's because Lily had never revealed the passionate feelings in her heart, that is, she had never confessed to Kurono. And neither did Kurono do so nor did he have intention to do something like that.

But this point of view was worthless theory in Lily's eyes.

("Who is it!? The woman, the bitch, the beast that tried to seduce my, MY Kurono!! Try laying even a single finger on him, I'll kill you so badly that not even small bits would remain!!!")

Mozrun who basically said that Kurono had gone to sleep with a woman, was taken extremely seriously by Lily.

("I won't forgive her! I will never forgive something as envious as that!! I haven't even ki, ki, kissed with him yet!!!")

Her emotions were exploding out as if her own restraints had been blown away to the moon.

("Where? Where did Kurono go? Where is he.....")

But, still to locate Kurono calmly even then was what made her cunning.

("If she is still in the village, then it must be an adventurer. Also, Mozrun said it was a 'cute elf girl' as well, so it's not a member of [Three hunting princesses] but someone that came today. That means, she must have returned after completing some quest without knowing the current situation. Then they must be in a place where she could be alone with a man—an inn of an adventurer, is it?")

There are two facilities where adventurers can stay in Alsace. One is the Guild, and the other is the common inn. Considering the scale of Alsace village, having another inn except the guild could be said to be a well equipped village.

And Lily has completely mapped this small village in her brain. Without even a single hesitation, she flew towards the only inn in the village.

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Found it.

Behind the inn, there is a dirty storage shed. Kuroono and that thieving cat are here.

“Kuroono.....I’ll save you right now.”

Thinking that my Kuroono could be dirtied right now, I felt every second was precious.

Thinking about it from outside was nothing but a waste of time.

So I’ll break in from the front and take the shortest distance towards Kuroono.

But I’ll still take care. After all she is someone who was able to capture Kuroono, who is the greatest man in this world, even if it was for only a short time. As long as she is an adventurer, she should be able to use force to remove obstacles as well.

Although, no adventurer can stand against the serious me, no, even if it was a rank 5 adventurer stronger than me or a dragon, I will still not hesitate to go help Kuroono. I must not hesitate.

And, at this moment, I’ll prove it.

In front of the weak wooden door,

“Fairy barrier – Oracle Field, full power!”

Light type defensive magic destroyed not just the door but even the wall that it touched as well, and made a path for me.

Beams, Light balls, and even [Meteor Strike]'s chant has been completed as I enter. If I face resistance, I'll erase without leaving any trace!

"Kurono!!"

As I broke inside the room, I found his beloved figure inside this room scattered with various items.

"Lily!?"

"Eh, What!? What's going on!? Why has the door been destroyed!?"

Kurono who widened his eyes in shock and another person was there. I see, so this is the thieving cat that tried to steal my Kurono?

Petite and slender body, along with gray hair and pointy ears, that were the characteristic feature of elves.

Her face was as Mozrun had said, cute, and her eyes were green like a cat's.

But, from my point of view, it's only average. Her beauty was not on a level that Charm would exist. She didn't even have an adult body with a good figure. She's just a brat.

If he wanted to lay his hands on such, such a low level woman, why did he not come to me—No, I should stop. First I need to eliminate her.

"It'll be fine Kurono, I'll save you right now."

Their clothes are still on. Looks like I avoided the worst scenario. That's a relief. But I can't be negligent until I remove her from in front of Kurono.

I smiled towards Kurono to make him feel relieved and then glared at the elf brat with intent to kill.

"hi, Hiii!?"

Fuun, weak scum, afraid from just my killing intent.

If she wants to lay hands on Kurono, she should first refine her pathetic skills at least, this third rate stupid woman—no, wait, wait a second.

“.....”

Is it actually a guy?

I just had an intuition but to check that I'll try to use telepathy deep inside his mind.

I soon got my answer.

(“Why——Why? Even though I'm a man——weak, pathetic——”)

He's a genuine man.

He looked cute as tears appeared in his big round eyes, but this elf is definitely a man.

But, I still can't be negligent.

No, if Kurono actually liked 'this type' then I can understand why he didn't lay his hands on me.

Especially strong men like not just girls but even boys, something like that was written in one of the books left by the magician in the hut in the forest.

Then, did Kurono have an urge to have this boy——

“Wait a second Lily!! You are definitely misunderstanding something!!!”

Suddenly Kurono had come in front of me. What, are you going to cover this brat who is not even a girl?

“This person is not an enemy! Just an adventurer, I came to talk to get help from this person!” (T/N: I am using 'this person' intentionally because Jap doesn't specify gender many times, like in this case.)

“I don't believe it.”

“This person came back from a quest just now, so I understand that you haven't seen this person before but it's not a spy or something from the Crusaders!”

I think there is some kind of a very big difference in what we are talking about.

No, it's definitely different, and the problem would be on my side, I think.

Eh, what? Did I jump to an early conclusion?

“Ok? So calm down and listen——“

“Oh, I see.....”

That’s fine.

At least, I don’t sense any sexual urges from Kurono’s outer layer of thoughts at least.

There’s no feeling of trying to hide a secret. He’s only trying to somehow stop me from acting while misunderstanding things.

I see. He was just a co-operator.....then, that means I was having an embarrassing misunderstanding only. So everything will settle peacefully here.

“.....then, let me hear the details as well.”(lily)

I decided to obediently back down.

If Kurono does not have any feelings for this boy then I have no problems.

What’s more problematic is what that skeleton bastard irresponsibly said. What, what did he mean by ‘He must enjoying himself right now!’, damn him this isn’t a joke. Due to that I ended up showing Kurono such an unsightly part of me.

I’m not gonna calm down until I at least hit him with one of my light beams.

“aa, um, this is Simon, a rank 1 adventurer.”

And after introducing myself to this guy called Simon, I listened to the situation from Kurono.

Though, now that I know that she’s not an ‘enemy’ woman, my interest in him has almost disappeared.

“——and so, I asked Simon to cooperate with me.”

For the rest I’ll just vaguely listen and act as I am convinced and this mess will be settled.

Or so it was supposed to be.....

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“Why are you making such a scary face Lily-san? Could it be that Kurono-san really was—”(Fiona)

“No, it was nothing. It was just a misunderstanding of that vulgar skeleton.”

On Fiona’s question, Lily made an effort to answer as calmly as possible.

But, Lily didn’t realize that Fiona still said that she had a ‘scary face’ even though Lily had returned to her child form.

“I see. Then that’s fine. It’s not rare to see a party disbanding due to a love affair after all.”

“How rare of Fiona to say something decent. Have you experienced it?”

“No, I only saw something like that happen, so you can say I was an observer.”

“I see. Well, be relieved. Kurono isn’t a weak man who can’t control his sexual desires.”

And Lily left after saying that she needed rest.

She was heading towards the room used by Kurono.

The person himself (kurono) was still talking with Simon in that lab cum storage room that suddenly had better ventilation due to the door disappearing.

Lily entered the empty room and jumped on the bed and stretched her limbs.

“.....It’s irritating.”

Lily pulled the blanket and buried her face in the pillow and breathed the scent left by Kurono.

Normally, there was nothing more relaxing than this aroma but right now, it only created waves in her heart.

“Why did Kurono.....such.....”

Just what was it? She didn't know why she was so disturbed.

But she knew the source of that feeling.

“He looked so happy.....”

That was how Kurono was with Simon.

The existence of guns. Alchemy that didn't use magic. As she was listening to him, she realized that Kurono was extremely attracted towards the ability possessed by Simon.

That was so clear that she didn't even need telepathy to know that.

Delight, curiosity, expectations, and other such strong feelings mixed together were clearly delivered to Simon as a straight compliment.

“I don't know that. I never got such feelings, I never received them.”

Lily had certainly created an emotional bond with Kurono, and also built up an unbelievable amount of trust in each other as well, that was no doubt about it. They clearly had a strong bond with each other.

For Kurono, in this different world, no, in his whole life, except for his family, there was no one more important than Lily.

Kurono's trust and deep affection were both, without a doubt, real. And Lily also understood that.

But affection and interest were 2 different emotions.

Lily certainly possessed Kurono's 'feelings/emotions' but she never made him interested in her.

Simon's existence had pulled Kurono's interest, which Lily had been unable to, completely through Alchemy.

As to why Kurono was so interested in Alchemy, Lily didn't look into his inner thoughts. No, she was unable to 'look over the construction'.

But rather than the reason, the fact that Simon had pulled Kurono's interest in him was,

“I don’t like this, Why, Why someone like him……”

Above all, she couldn’t simply accept it.

Lily, until now, was never dissatisfied with her current relation with Kurono.

No just due to Kurono’s behaviour, but Lily herself was satisfied as well.

For example, appearance.

There are many beautiful women like Fiona and Irina that appeared in front of Kurono.

But, she didn’t think that she was inferior to them in looks, thus she never became jealous of their beauty.

Kurono, who fought with his life on the line as an adventurer; she even had the strength to fight beside him so she never felt tormented by powerlessness either.

Yes, I am the perfect partner for Kurono, I don’t lack anything. That was what Lily thought.

But, today, with the appearance of the man called Simon, the fact that she could fulfil his heart was overturned.

“Why, Why is this so frustrating——”

And so Lily became aware of the emotion that was rampaging within her.

That was, for Lily who possessed absolute beauty and strength, an emotion she had never experienced.

A primitive emotion that comes to humans instinctively, that has been labelled as one of the major sins, a negative emotion.

“——I see, I am feeling jealous.”

Lily, for the first time after being born, experienced jealousy.

Chapter 96 - MPK Tactics

On the 26th of Shinyou, The Crusader troops led by Norz finally occupied Kuar that was also empty like Irz.

It should be obvious but due to Kurono's scorched earth tactics, they were unable to procure provision from here as well.

As long as there was no one in Kuar, Norz knew that this would be the case and was thus patiently waiting for the supply of provisions.

Norz expected this to continue till they reach the western most village of Alsace as well.

Since not a single demon could be found in the area, he expected to catch up with them by the Gallahad mountains near the border of Spada, beyond the village of Alsace and territory of Daedalus.

Between Alsace and Spada were mountains and the distance was also big. They might have quickly evacuated till Alsace but from here onwards even those demons would have difficulty in travelling and thus their speed will drop greatly as well.

Even if they had departed 1 week earlier, he could easily have the cavalry overtake them. So without any worries or impatience, Norz was moving the troops normally.

ButBut on the 27th of Shinyou, when they reached the village of Hejito, in front of the village that should be empty, Norz felt some unrest, no, it was more of a bad premonition.

And, that soon came true.

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“oo, this storehouse is still alright!”

The soldiers exploring the Hejito village raised their voices in joy on finding a storehouse that wasn't burned at all.

“It’d be nice if it’s a food storehouse.”

“No way, it should have valuables instead.”

“Stupid, there’s no way there would be a valuable storehouse in this countryside village.”

“Oi, stop with your stupid talks and let’s examine it already.”

“”Roger””

Under the command of their squad commander, the soldiers reached towards the door of the storehouse.

There was no lock so it was easily opened without any resistance and they entered the dim storehouse.

“n, doesn’t something smell —-“

The soldier that led the way; as soon as he realized that smell of a beast, his words were interrupted.

“—-a?”

When he realized that his stomach had been impaled by a spear, he screamed with fright and pain.

As he fell down as he kept on screaming, numerous blades rushed on to him and his death cries were soon drowned out.

“Oi! There’s something in there!!?!”

“What?! What is it!?!”

“Be careful, there are——“

They were unable to make out the identity of the things that killed the soldier inside that dim room.

“Move outside!!”

While swinging his sword towards the invisible enemy, the soldiers ran outside.

“ugaaah!! It hurts!!!”

“Wait! My leg—”

Two soldiers fell down as their legs were cut. One of them was carried away by another soldier but the other couldn't make it and was dragged away inside the dark storehouse.

While trying to ignore the screams of their comrades, they finally came out after 2 soldiers becoming victims inside.

“Shit! What the hell is this!!”

Outside, the soldiers aimed their arrows towards the door and lied in wait.

Soldiers who had sensed something wrong had also started gathering here.

The soldiers took their stances and prepared their weapons to fight against the invisible enemy that dwelled inside that storehouse.

“It's coming out!”

While raising an unpleasant voice, some beast like, monkey-like, creatures jumped out.

“Fire!!”

The moment they realized that, they fired the bows towards the door.

“It's Goblins!!”

Someone shouted out the identity of the figures jumping out and getting hit by arrows.

“Shit! An ambush by the demons!?”

“They were hiding in there!”

Goblins that wore ragged clothes and were wielding chipped spears, rusted swords, and maces made out of bones appeared.

They were clearly not the type of demons that lived in villages. They were stray goblins that lived in hills, aka monsters.

Why were they here? There were many soldiers who doubted that but right now they didn't have the time to sit and think about it.

“We’ll clean up those Goblins. After me!!”

The squad commander swung his long spear and attacked the swarm of goblins. The soldiers raised a war cry and also charged behind him.

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In various parts of the Hejito village, battles with monsters were popping up.

The main street where the commander Norz was was not an exception either.

After hearing the cries of monsters and the warcry of the soldiers, he had pretty much understood the situation even before the messenger came to give the report.

“A demon ambush, is it?”

“They seem to be only wild monsters. There’s no sign of any villagers.”

They didn’t know the reason behind why the monsters had appeared inside the village but Norz knew what he was supposed to do right now.

“Send some soldiers to every platoon from here. Also I leave the retrieval and treatment of the injured to you Sister Sylvia.”

“Roger that. And, what are you going to do?”

“hahaha, isn’t it obvious.”

Norz got down from his horse, drew the giant mace hanging on his waist and lightly lifted it and put it on his shoulder.

“The God’s enemies are in front of me, it’s the duty of us Priests to kill them!”

The line of spearmen was currently facing against a swarm of goblins whose eyes were glaring at them.

“I see. May the fortunes of war be with you, Norz Priest Head.”

As Sylvia retreated towards the rear, Norz lifted his mace that was bigger than usual ones, with one hand and jumped in front of the line of soldiers.

“Ooh, Priest-sama!”

As the commander himself came to the front lines, the soldiers raised cheers of joy.

This was the first time he was going to display his strength on the Pandora continent now that the enemy had come directly in front of him.

“Come at me damned monsters! Let me pass divine punishment on you in place of God!”

It was unknown whether they understood the meaning of his words or not but all the Goblins instantly pointed their killing intent towards the giant Norz that was standing in front of them.

While swinging their chipped and rusted weapons, the goblins rushed towards Norz.

“Terra Over Blast!!” – پیرس ک بیره صخرة ال صخور سحق سحق

The moment he smashed the mace on the ground, the earth and soil blew up.

As conical stone pillars rose towards the heavens, the army saw the earth itself rising upwards.

As the curtain of earth and sand disappeared, all that was left was numerous corpses of the goblins that had been skewered by the pillars or had their limbs blown away by the attack.

The lucky goblins that were outside the effective range of the magic were still alive but they had already stopped charging towards him like before.

Norz thought that the goblins would be annihilated if he ordered an assault now but,

“mu, looks like they have a boss as well.”

Beyond the stabbing pillars, he saw a goblin that wore a better fur pelt as a robe and also had a bone wand in its hands. Seeing that, Norz didn't give the order to attack.

("Is it a magician type? I need to bring it down first otherwise there would be useless injuries in the army.")

And the Boss was also accompanied by numerous subordinates and half of them were equipped with bows. And they were also already aiming the bows this way.

“ ! ﺃﻻ ﺷﻌﻠﺔ ﻋﺴﺎﻡ ﺗﻘﺪﺓ ﻧﺎﺭ ﺋﻼﺋﻤﺎ ”

The Goblin boss' voice was thick but it was clearly a magician's chant and quickly a fireball appeared on the tip of its wand.

“ ! ! ﺗﻮ ﻳﺮﺱ ﺳﺪ ﺑﻴﺮﺯ ”

As the chant completed, a red hot explosive fireball with diameter 30cm was fired by the goblin.

As if matching with the boss, the archers also released their arrows.

“ Terra Armour Shield!! — ﻻ ﺣﻤﺎﻳﺔ ﺟﺪﺍﺭ ﻛﻲ ﺑﻴﺮ ﺣﺠﺮ ﺻﺨﺮﺓ ﻣﻨﻊ ”

The Goblins attack approached but it was stopped by the defensive magic used by Norz.

The thick hard rock wall projected from the ground and covered everything from one end to another and stood in the way of the fireball and the arrows.

DODODODO!!!

The sound of explosion resounded and the rock wall vibrated but it easily stopped the attack without receiving even a single crack.

“haaaaaaaa!! Terra Blaaasstttt!!!!”

With a roar, he launched a no chant wide range attack magic.

Norz's mace struck the wall of rock and the wall broke, no, it broke into numerous pieces of rock that were the size of a head and rushed towards the goblins like cannonballs.

Using the wall as a shield then turning it into an attack was one of Norz's signature moves.

The rock cannonballs approached at high speed.

With a *gushari* sound, the small bodies of the Goblins were squashed by the tremendous force and death cries resounded, then,

“Now’s the chance! Attack!!!”

Norz gave the order to attack.

And thus the swarm of goblins that met with Norz’s main troops were annihilated in a matter of ten minutes.

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Before the night came, the monsters inside Hejito village were annihilated and they finally completely occupied the village.

Norz took his troops towards one of the storehouses. Inside that, the ‘reason’ behind the monsters appearing in the village was present.

“mu, this is.....”

Inside the dim storehouse, a sturdy steel cage was there.

Inside it, 4 corpses of goblin children were kept.

They must have been killed by the troops that found this place as many arrows used by the crusaders were stuck on them.

Norz narrowed his eyes due to seeing something so filthy and one of the soldiers gave an explanation.

“We have found these things all over the village. Probably, they probably stole eggs or children of the wild monsters and locked them up in these cages.”

Looking closely, there were many scratches on the cage grids.

Monsters who didn’t have the skill to break open lock like a Thief must have tried to break open the cages to save their children.

But a rank 1 monster could not display enough strength to break open the cage.

“Then, the demons used these monster children as bait and lured the monsters inside the village to ambush us?”

“Yes, this can’t be a simple coincidence after all.”

“Although they are mere monsters, to have used the feelings of parents and children like this.....those demons really used a vile plan!”

Norz or the Crusaders felt no guilt on the deaths of the monsters.

But to have used children to pull uninvolved creatures to battle, Norz, who held the sense of justice of the Cross, could only feel that the plan was evil.

“I thought they were just running away, but it seems they really mean to oppose us.”

He had no basis. It could only be another plan to just gain time.

But Norz’s instincts were telling him that the enemy was definitely use ‘any means possible’ to go against them.

“Those demons really are evil. We must annihilate them as soon as possible.”

Chapter 97 - The Maximum Firepower of [Element Master] (1)

30th of Shinyou. Since the Crusaders did not arrive in the shortest expected time, i.e. 3 days, construction work was still continuing to create an even stronger and sturdier line of defence.

And since most of the construction had been done and the adventurers that left for MPK tactic also returned successfully, we decided to postpone everything else for today.

“Today, we’ll perform an experiment to confirm our maximum firepower!”

And so, we came to this vast plain about 1km west of Alsace.

By the way, the members are me, Lily and Fiona only.

Today’s experiment was a simple one to simply fire our strongest attacks and measure its destructive ability.

Normally there seems to be a magic item that is meant to measure this, but right now we don’t have the time to accurately measure it numbers. In the first place, we won’t find such a high tech magic item in this rural area.

For the time being, I’ll at least get an idea about the level after seeing it once.

“Don’t you think it’s a bit too late for this?”

“Don’t say that Fiona. You know everyone was busy till now.”

Well, that’s true.

“I don’t know what level of magic can the adult Lily and Fiona use. But I’m sure its pretty high level so you guys will definitely be the key in the upcoming battle, so I’m counting on you guys!”(kurono)

“Being told this directly is a bit embarrassing.”(Fiona)

“Right?!”(lily)

Fiona who really didn’t look actually embarrassed and Lily who was giving a wide smile; these two together really make for a great pic.

But unfortunately, we didn't come here for hiking or picnic. Though that would have been fun, I can't really complain now.

"Then first is—"

"Let's start with Kurono-san."

"eh? Me?"

"Yes. You're the leader after all."

"Kurono, good luck!"

I see. I need to do this as well. Lily aside, Fiona had never seen me fight after all.

"Alright. Then I'll show you my best one!"

"waa"

"Waa!"

Fiona clapped unimpressed and Lily innocently clapped loudly. It feels nice.

I was going to start, but wait a second.

If we're talking about my strongest magic, then its [Magic Bullet – Bullet Arts Full Burst].

In terms of piercing ability, Sword Arts might be stronger than a single bullet but that depends more on the ability of the weapon itself. It's base strength is very average.

Also since martial arts are treated differently than magic, the grudge hatchet's [Kuronagi] is also a no go here.

And my [Bullet Arts Full Burst]'s effect is to fire an enormous number of black magical energy bullets rapidly.

If I use this in an empty plain like this one, the bullets will only fly far-faraway and will not cause any kind of explosion either. There'll be no change in the scenery at all.

This won't do. Don't I have something that can just simply cause a lot of destruction? Firing guns requires an aim after all!

“You’re making a troubled face Kurono-san. What happened?”

“Does your stomach hurt?”(lily)

While making a calm face, I ran forwards in a straight line.

“Ah.”

I heard the voices of the two I left behind but I dashed without paying attention.

After running for about a 100m, yeah, it should be fine here.

“[Shadow Gate]”

[Shadow Gate] is the same as [Shadow Space] that I had been using till now but after taking lessons in techniques from the dark magician Mossan, [Shadow Gate] is the levelled up version with more capacity and faster deployment speed.

By manipulating the shadow, I created a circle-shaped shadow of diameter 1m on the ground.

Controlling the shadow basically shapes my own shadow into different things, so enlarging it and reducing it also possible.

But it can’t separate from the caster himself so even this big circle is connected with me with a small shadow.

“Um, Crusaders’ armaments were around 1 set right?—-”

4th dimensional pocket really makes me feel like that robot cat. Especially now that the goods inside have increased.

From inside the shadow, I brought out the basic equipment of crusaders that was a surcoat and chainmail.

All that’s left is to randomly create a humanoid shape and make it wear this.

Materializing magical energy is the speciality of my black magic. I can create a body as long as I don’t focus on sturdiness, durability etc.

A randomly created weak thing won’t be of any help in a battle but it can at least become a target aim for me.

I created a body of around my height, though it was shaped like a sheet/plank.

I made it wear the chainmail and surcoat and it was complete!

“Well, this much is fine.”

And I once again dashed back to where Fiona and Lily were.

“Alright. Then I’ll show you my best one!”

“oh so you’re going to start again from there.”(Fiona)

Fiona’s cold words stabbed me but I’ll pretend to not mind it.

“I think you would have already understood but I’ll fire my magic towards that.”

I took one step in front of them and took out my [Black Ballista Replica].

Bullets had already been [loaded] and the bullets now floated around me in a circle.

“[Bullet Arts Full Burst]”

Over a thousand bullets rushed towards the target together.

As if firing against a real soldier, I didn’t hold anything back.

The bullets covered the 100m distance in an instant and reached the target.

The human shape became destroyed as if someone put it inside a mixer.

It was as if nothing even existed there in the first place.

“How was it?”(kuro no)

“Um, that’s it?”(Fiona)

“Eh? Yeah I’m done...”

I knew that it wasn’t something really surprising but to think that she would be this disappointed.....

“It won’t explode?”

“There’s no explosion. I only hardened the magical energy after all.”

“a, does it have tracking ability?”

“.....It only flies straight.”

“Was it a Single Action?”

“Yeah I just used single action in a large number.”

“I see——“

I realized even before Fiona said it. My black magic was really,

“——It’s simpler than I thought.”(Fiona)

Fiona who gave a unrestrained opinion made me cry a bit.

Chapter 98 - The Maximum Firepower of [Element Master] (2)

“Kurono, Kurono, cheer up ~”

“Sorry Kurono-san, I’m the type who ends up saying whatever comes to my mind.”

“No.....it’s fine, it’s true that my magic is too simple.....”

“Yes, I couldn’t even lie that it was amazing.”

After hearing Fiona’s words that didn’t give a good follow up at all, I somehow changed my thoughts and cheered myself up from being too negative.

Lily who was still loveably cheering me up was my only emotional support.

“Alright, then next up is Lily?”(kurono)

“Un!”

As she cheerfully replied, she took out a red gem the size of a tennis ball.

This magic Artifact known as [Queen Beryl] possessed an enormous amount of magical energy that allowed Lily to return to her normal form even without the Fairy Queen’s Divine Protection.

I can actually feel it from the shine and magical energy radiating from it.

“eei!!”

With a cute shout, Lily was enveloped in dazzling light and I ended up turning my eyes away due to the light.

“—fuu, now then, I should also do my best, I guess.”(lily)

The next moment, the beautiful young girl version of Lily stood there.

The one piece dress worn by Lily, Ancient velvet was the same as my [Baphomet’s Embrace], and changes its size according to the one wearing it.

Thus even after the change in the size of her body, it remained a perfect fit to her body.

“a, no need to create a target for me alright. My magic isn’t plain like yours.”(lily)

“guhaa!!”

Even my one and only ally also said such things!?

“nfufu, sorry sorry, I know how amazing Kurono’s magic actually is, okay?”(lily)

As an evil playful smile floated on her face, she patted my head while tiptoeing.

What’s with this carrot and stick tactics? Is Lily a bad girl who leads men by their noses?

“I’m fine so just show it already.”(kurono)

“Ye~s.”

Giving me a smooth wink, she turned her back towards me and began to chant.

“يَهْ لَكَ تَ حَطْمَ نَ جُومَ تَ أَلَقِ”

As expected, I still can’t make any sense of it, but I think it was much smaller than the ones I have heard till now.

Only lower level primary Model magic have chants so small, but there’s no way Lily’s magic would be a low level one.

With just that small chant, above the area where I had set the target, a giant magic circle made of white light appeared.

“Amazing.”(Fiona)

“Yeah, Lily really is amazing.”

The strongest magic of Lily I have ever seen is the pillar of light that is fired from that magic circle in the sky.

Even in her child form, it was strong enough to make the goblin cave collapse. How much stronger will it be now?

The current magic circle was many times bigger than the one I knew.

“—Meteor Strike.”

What was launched from the magic circle wasn't a pillar but a giant mass.

Yes, it was exactly as its name, a meteorite flashing in 7 colours.

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“That was an amazing magic. To be able to control so much magical energy so well, I'm envious Lily-san.”

Fiona complimented Lily in front of the crater of 50m diameter created by Lily.

In front of the power that surpassed our expectations, both me and Fiona had the same mental state.

So magic can actually be this powerful. In front of this, my bullet arts isn't plain, it's nonexistent!

“fuf, thank you. But although it is strong, it is slow in speed so an opponent who is fast can evade it. Kurono's magic bullets are more convenient against human opponents as there is no wastage and it is very efficient in killing as well.”

“That's true. Against the same number of opponents, Kurono-san's magic can finish the job while consuming much less magical energy. Lily-san's magic must use a lot of energy, right?”

“I can't even use it consecutively infact. I must make sure to use it only when I'm sure of hitting the enemy.”

You two, thanks for covering for me.

“But, a normal magician can't even produce this much power, right?”(kurono)

“Well yeah. In my current state, I’m equal to a rank 5.”

“Even in the crusaders, there must be very few who can display this level of power I think.”

“As expected, Lily really is amazingly skilled. Even though its only for 30 mins, you still will be our pillar of protection.”

“ufufufu, that’s right, so compliment me more and more!”

She leaned in close to me just like when she is a child. It’s really embarrassing when she does that in her girl form. But damn she’s too cute!

“Then, lastly it’s my turn.”(Fiona)

“a, aa, give it your all.”

My expression that had relaxed while I fawned over lily became stiff and strict again. Though, my hand was still patting and caressing Lily’s head.

“Yes, as per your demand, or rather, I want you two to see my full strength right now when we have the chance.”

Fiona can’t control her magic properly so she would often attack in an excessively wide range. Basically, there was a risk of friendly fire so she was not taken in by any parties apparently.

Let’s just say that only after seeing her most dangerous one and accepting it will she become our true party member.

That’s why I wanted to see her full strength.

“aa, use the strongest one you can.”(kuronono)

“ok, then——“

And then, she raised her staff [Ainz Broom] overhead and began her chant.

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At the same time, at Alsace village, all the adventurers that were preparing and working stopped moving.

A loud sound of an explosion, as if a volcano erupted, resounded and a large black cloud appeared in the sky.

“What the hell is that?”

“That direction, that’s where Kurono and the others went to experiment, right?”

Even Vulcan and Irina, who were high ranked, were baffled by this.

“That means it’s due to a magic?”

“I think so, but.....”

The place where the supposed magic was used was approximately 1km away from here. To be able to see it even from here, the fact made the adventurers instantly shudder.

“.....what outrageous power.”

The black smoke kept on rising towards the sky.

The fact that this thick smoke, that could only been seen in cases of forest fires, was caused due to a single magic would have instilled fear in the hearts of adventurers, even those that have learnt attack magic.

“Flames, means it’s that gluttonous witch girl?”

“I think. I saw her magic once at Irz but it seems that was not her full power.”

“Kurono and that small fairy were already a weird combo, and now they also have a witch with outrageous firepower. What’s up with his crazy party?”

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There was not even a trace left of the crater made by Lily.

That's because an even larger crater of about a 100m diameter has been created in front of me.

".....Kurono, are you alright?"

"Yeah."

Lily was still hugging me from the front. Her Oracle Field had also covered me inside it.

"Thanks for protecting me."

"un, as long as you are fine."

Yes, the moment Fiona used her 'strongest magic', Lily ran towards me and protected me.

The crater was created about 100m away from me but she must have done that to protect me from the shockwaves that were created.

The crater created by the giant explosion had almost reached in front of us.

If we had been inside the range—I really don't want to think about it.

".....How, was it?"

And the culprit who brought this giant destruction, Fiona turned towards us normally.

How was it? Isn't that obvious?

"Amazing Fiona! With this we can win against the Crusaders! Ha-ha-ha-ha!!!"

Yes, amazing, at least the power was amazing. This is far beyond my imagination.

To have displayed this level of power alone, she is an incredible magician.

Just how much of an idiot are the people in the republic to have let her go away?

Well whatever. Thanks to that I was able to meet Fiona. That too, at this timing when the Crusaders were approaching.

“I am happy that Fiona became our comrade. I’ll have you use this power to its fullest.”

Standing in front of her, I clearly gave words of acceptance.

“I see.....I’ll work hard.”

Her tri-cornered hat’s visor bent down and hid Fiona’s current expression.

Somehow, her answer didn’t seem too energetic.

“n, you alright?”

“Sorry, when I use this magic——-“

And just like that she fell on my chest.

“——I become unable to move for some time since I get tired.”

This is the exact reverse of the time when I fought against the Crusaders in Irz and was saved by Fiona.

Just how she held me back then, I also decided to gently catch her in my arms.

“I see. Take rest then.”

“Yes, I’ll accept your offer.”

It’s a bit embarrassing but I continue talking for the time being.

“But still, if you fall after just one use then you’ll have to think of the right time and place to use this.”

“Yes, but Kurono-san please think that for me.”

“Alright. I’ll have you use it right when it counts the most.”

As I simulated the battle with the crusaders in my mind, I held Fiona up in my arms.

Basically what you would call a ‘princess carry’.

“Fuwaa!? Ku,Kurono-san, this posture is.....!”

“You can’t move right? I’ll carry you like this till the village so don’t worry.”

“That’s not exactly the problem here.....”

Fiona brought her hat even more in front of her face and hid herself.

Ah, could it be that she’s thinking something like ‘Don’t touch a woman’s body so casually!?’ or something like that.....I did it with absolute good intentions but, did I go too far?

“Should I put you down?”

“That’s not it.....no, then quickly take me to the village please.”

“Ou, leave it me!”

Let’s go then, the moment I thought that, a small impact came from my back.

“Kurono, I can’t move either so carry me.”(lily)

“Li, Lily?”

As I turned to look back,

“Carry me as well.”

Lily asked me while smiling cutely as usual.

But I can tell, her eyes aren’t laughing, actually, they are scary.

“n, no, Lily, weren’t you energetic just——“

“I’m tired. My fatigue came in just now, so carry me, and hold me. Doing it just for Fiona is not fair.”

“.....got it.”

I don’t think I can go against it.

At the end, I worked hard to walk to Alsace village 1 km away while completely carrying both Lily and Fiona.

And, needless to say, all the adventurers greeted us with a warm gaze without saying anything.

Chapter 99 - The Natsugoshi Festival (1)

Normally, the Natsugoshi Festival was held on the 30th of Shinyou but we still continued with our preparations—or so I thought.

“Wha, what the hell is this……?”

As I returned from the construction site of the protective wall by evening, the lobby of the guild was filled with lantern-like decorations and the dull guild hall looked like a festival ground now.

This is strange. When I left the lobby during the morning, it was the same as usual but was it decorated while I was out?”

“Ou, you’re back Kurono.”

“Vulcan, what’s going——- What the hell is up with your getup!?!”

It was Vulcan who appeared first but currently he was wearing a Happi coat over his large frame and a headband on his wolf head.(T/N: Google happi coat. You’ll recognize it from animes.)

By the way, on the back of the happi coat, the character for [Summer/Natsu] was painted on it.

“Well that’s obviously because the Natsugoshi festival is today. C’mon hurry up and change quickly. Everyone’s waitin for ya.”

Vulcan looked at me as if I asked something stupid and handed me a set of happi coat and headband.

I didn’t hear anything about this. Neither did I hear anything about the fact that we were celebrating the festival nor did anyone told me that the dress is an almost traced copy of what the Japanese wore during festivals. If there was a fundoshi to go along with it, it would have been similar enough to make a claim in court and win!

“Why are you making such a face? The enemy is currently focused on occupying the Vato village. They won’t come here today.”

“Is, is that so——-“

Certainly, as per the reports of the scouts, the enemy won't be here by the speed with which they are advancing.

Then tonight, it might be nice to actually enjoy the festival, no, looking at the hopeful eyes of the adventurers in the lobby, I really don't have the option to deny them.

"—alright."

I took off my trademark black robe and the shirt beneath it and put on the happi coat.

I fired myself up as I tightened my headband, yeah, I'm already in a total festive mood!

"Alright! Let's do this tonight!!"

"Ou, that's the spirit Kurono! C'mon, go and quickly raise the cheers!"

I took the sake cup prepared by Vulcan and moved towards the middle of the lobby. Everyone already had a sake cup in their hands and were waiting to put it to their lips.

This atmosphere, I don't need to give any long speech, just one word is needed. I lifted my cup and shouted,

"Cheers!!"

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Now that I think about it, it's the first time that all the adventurers are partying together like this. On the day the alliance was formed, we did go drinking in the Kuar village but at that time only the adventurers of Kuar were present and the number of adventurers was much less.

I needed to use this chance to increase my friendship with the adventurers. I went around making courtesy calls around the big table and was busy left and right.

Well considering that we have been working together for so many days, all of them had already become my acquaintances.

“hee, how hardworking.”(Vulcan)

At the end Vulcan said that to me as I returned to my seat.

“It is important, you know?”(kuroono)

I wonder if only I think that since I am a Japanese?

Well it’s fine, now that I am done greeting everyone, I can finally sit down and eat some food.

“Oh right, where are Lily and Fiona?”

They were at the table during the toast but did they go away to have some girl’s talk with female adventurers?

“She’ll be back soon, well, you can increase the friendship among your own party now.”

Saying that, Vulcan stood up and left towards another table.

“Well, that’s how it is so I’ll also take my leave.”(mossan)

After Vulcan, Mossan also left towards another table.

“Wh, What’s going on??.....”

I had various doubts but I was the only one left on the table.

Eh, what, could it be that I’m being avoided?

Just when my heart was about to start aching,

“Kuroono!!”

“Kuroono-san.....”

The ones who appeared were Lily and Fiona, the members of my party.

Why the hell is Lily in her normal bishoujo form? It’s not the full moon today, no, that’s not it, the most surprising point isn’t that.

“Wh, Wha, What the hell is that costume!?!”

That costume, if I had to use one word, it would be – Bunny girl.

The two girls were currently clad in black cloth that was like a swimsuit and it covered only half of their chests and their legs were fully visible.

I don't know how but on their heads, two fluffy bunny ears were attached. Yup, it's definitely a bunny girl.

“Does it look good?”(lily)

“.....how is it?”(Fiona)

Lily who had absolute confidence and Fiona's eyes were swimming here and there and her cheeks were dyed red with embarrassment.

If you were embarrassed then don't force yourself, is what I was thinking, but seeing Fiona's super rare expression worth 1000 gold coins, I decided to change my thoughts.

I was well aware that Lily was beautiful enough to possess 'Charm' but Fiona who looked shy standing along with her was almost equally comparable.

“It, It suits you, yeah.”

I had already been charmed by the two but somehow I gave a reply.

“ufufu that's good.”(lily)

With a wide smile, she walked towards me and as if she was still in her child form, she sat on my lap like it was normal.

“Uoh, wait, Lily!?”

“nn, what is it Kurono?”

As she sat sideways on my lap, her bare legs fully came into my view as she crossed her legs and at the same time both of her hands locked around my neck.

Dangerous, her face is too close. No her body that touching me is even more dangerous.

I shouldn't have removed my undershirt as well. Her body touching directly my skin is too dangerous! It's not at a level a high school boy can tolerate.

Calm down, don't lose control. Wasn't she completely naked the first time I saw her in this form during that full moon night? Compared to that, this much is no problem.

But, but still, for some reason her body isn't shining like a fairy at all and she looks totally like a normal woman.

What kind of trick is this? Is this also magic? Damn, Lily's extra magic is too convenient!

I stopped my useless thoughts and decided to somehow end this embarrassing yet happy situation.

"Move, move away a bit Lily."

"ufufu, nope!"

This conversation has happened before as well. Normal form Lily really is in a rebellious stage. This 32yr old, isn't her rebellious stage coming a bit too late!?

"Look, I can't eat like this."(Kuronon)

"It's fine. I help you eat very nicely."

Those emerald eyes shined mischievously towards me. Somehow it feels the same as looking at a prey. Basically, I have no way to run away now.

"Ah, um, that's, how should I say, embarrassing. People are looking as well."

"eeh, it can't be helped, then —"

Lily gave a devilish smile.

"I'll let you go if you kiss me here."

She said that as she showed her cheek to me that became slightly red.

"Are, are you serious Lily?....."

"fufu, let's test whether it's a joke or not, Kuronon."

As she said that, Lily closed her eyes and turned her head away. If I move even a little bit forwards my lips would reach her cheek.

“C’mon, be fast, even I’m a bit embarrassed.”(lily)

Is what she said, but her voice sounds totally composed to me.

Kuh, now I feel stupid to be the only one worrying too much. I don’t know whether Lily’s either drunk or joking or teasing me or serious but I’m not gonna hesitate from just a kiss on the cheek, or I’ll be an embarrassment as a man.

Well I did call it ‘just a kiss’ but this is the first time for me to have kissed a woman on her cheek.

“eei, here I go!”

The moment I resolved myself, before I could feel a soft sensation on my lips,

“Uoh! So bright!!?”

A bright white light struck my eyes.

“Wha, what the hell! I was surprised!?!”

Damn it! As I thought that, my eyes recovered from the whiteout.

“nn, hurry up and kiss me.”

As I lowered my sight, instead of the Lily who was erotically showing me her cheek, the child lily was sitting on my lap now.

“yes yes, kiss on the cheek, right?”(kurono)

Without thinking anything else, without any problem or reluctance, I lifted the small Lily in my arms and put my lips on her round cheek.

“Kya!!”

Lily twisted around with embarrassment. She really is cute! Yup, Lily should be like that always.

“Now, go sit on your seat properly ‘kay?”(kurono)

“Ye-s!”

With a lovestruck (dere dere) happy expression, the child Lily sat down on the seat right of me.

Her bunny girl outfit had fallen down since her body became small but her bunny ears were still in place.

Lily returned to her nostalgic fully nude body that was gently covered with the shining white light unique to the fairies.

“fuu, I feel tired suddenly.”(kurono)

“Too bad for Lily-san though.”(Fiona)

Before I realized, Fiona had sat down on my left. Of course she’s still in her bunny outfit but she already had stacked up plates filled with meat in front of her as usual.

Maybe because she saw my and Lily’s embarrassing exchange so closely, she had already returned to her usual cool expression.

“.....Fiona won’t ask for a kiss as well, right?”(kurono)

“Do you want me to?”(Fiona)

“Sounds really fascinating but I’ll be troubled if you ask right now.”

“Then, as a replacement, I’ll help you eat.”

Due to that sudden reply, I was surprised.

“Eh, seriously?”

“No need to hold back, this is a special service after all.”

Special service? Because it’s a festival? In the first place, I still don’t know the reason behind the bunny outfit.....

“Then here, Aah~n.”

Disregarding my doubts, Fiona presented the dish to me in her own pace.

The thing brought in front of me was a mysterious meat with gravy, no it should be dortoth’s meat, I ate it a long time ago back in the Irz village guild.

“Say aah~n, aah~~~~~n.”

“Alright, alright, I get it. I’ll eat it now so don’t rush me so much!”

She isn’t even giving me time to reminisce about that time. I bit into the meat in front of me.

“Un, tasty, the mysterious——dortoth meat is really tasty.”

“I see.”

Fiona once again stabbed the juicy dortoth meat with a fork. I once again opened my mouth and wait to be fed, but,

“omnomnom——it really is tasty.”(Fiona)

“Weren’t you going to feed me!?! ”

Now I feel stupid to have opened my mouth like that!

“I gave you one bite, isn’t that enough?”

She implied that all the rest was for her only and started eating the meat at high speed.

“no, yeah, I was stupid to have expected anything.....”(kuroono)

Fiona’s service time ended very quickly and she was now inside her own world of tasty foods.

“Kuroono, Aah~n!”

The voice that came from my right was that of an Angel, no, of a beautiful fairy.

Holding the fork with her small hands, she presented the food towards me.

“uu, thank you, Lily.....”

The taste of the food inside my mouth, I felt, was even tastier than normal. Affection is a really amazing thing.

Chapter 100 - The Natsugoshi Festival (2)

And after this and that and chatting and laughing with Lily and eating my meal, I once again decided to pull out this topic.

“By the way, just what is that costume?”

“Eh?”

‘Is there something weird about it?’ Fiona looked at me as if she really didn’t know what I was saying.

Could it be that she has already forgotten what getup she’s in right now because she’s always wearing a witch’s robe?

“aa, are you talking about this?”

After looking at my face and her own body about 3 times, she finally understood.

“It is apparently a traditional costume worn by young women in this area.”

Bunny girl is? That is a very lewd tradition, I must say.

“It’s meant to be worn at ‘critical times’.”

What kind of time is that?

“Lily-san said that I should use this opportunity to wear these clothes and give Kurono-san some service as thanks.”(Fiona)

“Is that so?”

“Yes.”

Fiona said that brimming with confidence. Where did the embarrassment when she came first go? She is making a face that has no regrets.

Well, I can’t say that I am not happy but, it can’t be helped since it was too abrupt. To appear in a bunny outfit out of nowhere and then tell me that it’s the traditional costume here is something I could never even imagine.

“un, but really thank you.”

“don’t mind it.”

I honestly gave her my thanks. Lifting Lily on my lap, I patted her silky soft hair.

“Thanks Lily. It made me happy.”

“ehehe.”

She seemed embarrassed but she smiled happily. Damn, my Lily’s so damn cute that it’s dangerous.

“But—“

As I looked back towards Fiona, I once again thought that the costume was really amazing.

I understand that wearing such an outfit just to thank me is really impressive (?) but, that doesn’t change the fact that the amount of body exposure is really stimulating.

And since she is usually in that witch robe, let alone body, even her body line is barely visible. Due to the hentai synergy caused when someone/something who is usually hidden becomes so exposed, the level of impact I received is immeasurable.

Besides, Fiona’s face is so high levelled that it doesn’t get overshadowed even with Lily around. In terms of Adventurer rank it would definitely be rank 5.

Golden eyes that were as bright as the sun along with light blue short hair, from the pov of a Japanese, it might be strange and magical, but somehow amazingly, it perfectly suits her.

Although her body doesn’t glitter, I could see her transparent-like white shoulders and legs.

Fiona who was bodily older than Lily had the proper curves where it counts, and her womanly roundness could be seen right now. Due to the bunny outfit, her curvy waist, that was emphasized, could make any woman jealous. Even more so because she is always eating no matter what time of the day.

“Is something wrong, Kurono-san?”

Her golden eyes came in between my impolite gaze. The fact that actually only doubt could be seen in her eyes actually made me feel sorry.

“sorry, it’s nothing—it hurts!!”

Is what I say, but the damage isn’t much.

As a slight pain ran through my fingertip, I saw Lily biting on my finger while giving a slight reproachful look.

“uu!”

“ah, sorry sorry, it was my bad so let my finger go.”

“hmph.”

Lily puffed her cheeks and looked away. This is bad, she must have read my indecent thoughts while looking at the bunny girl Fiona.

“Really sorry.”

Even though she was angry, she still sat on my lap as usual. She’s like a selfish cat in a sense. Then, here, I’ll need to pat her gently and cheer her up.

“Kurono-san.”

“nn?”

While patting Lily, I turned to talk back to Fiona.

“Please keep on being affectionate like that to Lily-san. She really was excited to show Kurono-san this outfit.”

Well now, I’m embarrassed as well as happy. This really is a heart-warming episode; it really made my heart flutter a bit.

“I see, thanks Lily!”

“Kya Kya!”

I patted her with even more vigour and affection than usual.

Maybe because she felt my warm feelings as well, Lily seemed to be in an even higher tension than usual.

“But you two really have gotten close.”(kurono)

“We have been making potions together all this time after all. To make her miracle drug, she had to return to her normal form today as well. That’s why she could stay like that in front of Kurono-san only for a few minutes.”

“Aa, so that’s why she suddenly reverted back.”

Certainly, Lily can only take her normal form for only 30 mins through the Queen Beryl and she used those last few minutes to stay with me.

Somehow, I suddenly feel regret that I wasn’t able to properly kiss the adult Lily.

“Since she used all her strength, until she sleeps the whole night, she won’t be able to turn back her consciousness either.”

“I see. You really worked hard Lily.”

Lily twisted her body in embarrassment while sitting on my lap.

“Also, the reason why only 3 of us were left alone together was because Lily-san said that she wanted to increase the friendship among the members of [Element Master].

“oh, so that’s why everyone left their seats here.”

Unexpectedly, everyone’s pretty sensitive and tactful. While admiring, I also gave my thanks to the adventurers who could read the atmosphere.

“By the way, what exactly do we have to do to deepen our friendship?”(kurono)

“Even I don’t know that. I don’t have any experience from the time when I was a student either.”(Fiona)

Fiona suddenly confessed something extremely saddening.

“Um, should I not touch anything regarding your school days?”(kurono)

“I don’t really mind. I was able to graduate even while being completely alone after all.”(fiona)

Uwaa, I just heard something even sadder. Her friends were definitely 0. Even I didn’t have many friends but it wasn’t this bad.

Just because she could destroy even a dungeon with her overpowered dangerous attack magic, there wasn't any need to avoid her either. But the person himself doesn't seem to mind it much either, but that makes it even sadder.....

"Alright, let's drink a lot tonight Fiona!"

To drink away your bad memories with alcohol is what adults do. Though I don't really have any experience since I was still a minor back in Japan.

But after coming here, I have developed a taste for it.

"But I'm already drinking though." (Fiona)

"It's fine. It's the feelings that count. Now then, to deepen the friendship among the members of [Element Master], Cheers!"

"Cheers."

"Cheers!!"

The 3 glasses struck each other.

Now then, what should I talk about? If I go by the current flow, I feel like I would end up asking something tasteless so I should be careful.

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Late at night, I climbed the stairs of the guild with the heavily sleeping Lily in my hands.

I just separated from Fiona. We drank quite a lot but maybe because of having high alcohol resistance, she was only a bit tipsy and so should be able to sleep well tonight.

On the other hand, I, thanks to my modified body, I could safely climb the stairs and could walk without stumbling.

I thought of going back to my room, but before that I need to enter a different room.

“I’m coming in, Simon”

“Ah, Onii-san.”

It was Simon’s room. To help give him space for research and development, he had two rooms with the wall in between broken down.

In the centre of the room, Simon was sitting while wearing a white robe.

“Sorry that only we had been partying and racketing till now. Was it too noisy?”

“It’s fine. I don’t really like things like that and I can’t drink sake either. And the noise wasn’t really disturbing either. I’m the type who becomes unable to listen anything else when I concentrate.”

After adjusting the gun in his hand, Simon turned towards me.

I could see fatigue on that cute face.

After we met, he has been reducing his sleep to work more.

And his job wasn’t just development. I was actually worried that he might be working harder than even me.

“But, are alchemists knowledgeable even with magic?”

Simon gave a wry smile and answered.

“I have only dabbled in the working and techniques of it. I can’t really use magic with a magic circle or a chant.”

That’s why, I can’t even use even the simplest of magics. He said to himself with a self depreciating smile.

“But thanks to that, the machine gun has been completed.”(kuroono)

“Well yeah, I feel glad that I actually remembered the techniques of magic.”(simon)

It must have been painful and bitter to have learnt something you could not even use.

Not to mention that many others could easily use the same skills. It must have felt stupid to be learning something like that.

But now's not the time to be thinking about such stuff. So I decide to change the topic.

"a, should I have brought something for you to eat?"(kuroono)

"I'm fine. Just now, well, some time ago Su-san brought lots of things for me."(simon)

"I see. Good to see you're getting along."

Simon gave a small nod and pulled a chair for me and asked if I wanted to sit.

"Nah, I just came to look so I'll go now. Simon, you should also sleep tonight."(kuroono)

It was already midnight. It wasn't good to stay up for so long all the time.

"un, but—"

"No need to overwork yourself. I'll be troubled if you collapsed."

"I see, yeah, then I'll go to sleep now."

"yeah, you should do that."

Turning my back to Simon, I moved towards the exit door.

".....Probably tomorrow.."(simon0

As to what he meant, I didn't even need to ask.

I stopped my legs and I answered with a question.

"Yeah, you scared?"(kuroono)

"No, these past few days, I really had fun. I got a lot of ideas from Onii-san that I could have never come up with. Also, Onii-san's the only one who has ever depended on me so much, so, I was really happy."

"I see—After this is over, I have many things I want you to create."

"Yeah, I'm looking forward to it as well."

There was no need to speak anything else.

“Bye, good night.”

“yeah, Good night.”

I quietly left Simon’s room.

“Tomorrow——”

I muttered softly.

Today’s merrymaking done with Natsugoshi festival as an excuse really helped in lowering the tension of the upcoming battle.

But, today, on the 30th of Shinyou, I should have been in Irz right now.

I promised to treat Nyarko to a drink, I was supposed to visit stalls with Lily, I would have laughed while seeing the incompetent Nino, I would have been extorted by Aten under the guise of our promise as well.

But, none of those will come true anymore.

But no matter how sad, painful, bitter it was——no tears will flow out of my eyes any more.

In front of the graves of everyone, I have already cried enough.

From here on out, there’s only one thing I have to do.

“——Watch over me. I’ll kill them, I’ll kill them all. No matter how many of them may come.”

I’ll kill as many as I can of those Crusaders.

In this Alsace’s defensive battle, I’ll make you bastards compensate for your crimes with your blood.

Chapter 101 - The Black Building (Black Box)

The next day, on the 1st day of the month of Hatsuhi (new flame), inside the conference room of the guild that had become as dark as the night itself through Kurono's blackening, all the representative members of The Adventurer Alliance had gathered together.

"Firstly, let's hear the reports. Was the MPK tactic in Vato village also broke through?"(kurono)

"Yes, the priest who is probably also the commander of the army killed the Garuda."

On Kurono's question, Irina, the representative of the scout squad gave her report.

"Garuda was able to damage the infantry a lot but unfortunately it was unable to hurt much of the heavy armoured knights or the Pegasus knights. The Priest who uses light and earth magic led the vanguard himself and killed all the monsters in Vato village."(irina)

"I see, so the result wasn't good even after making them face a rank 4 Garuda."(kurono)

"What, does that mean that this MPK tactic failed?"(Vulcan)

Vulcan, who was also a part of the MPK tactic, was currently sitting cramped in his sit due to his giant 2 meter body.

"If it was able to reduce even a little of their strength, then it was a success. Since we don't have the exact numbers of how many of them got killed or injured, you might not realize it though. Also, the main gain was that we were able to delay them from the expected 3 day time till today."

Thanks to that, they were able to finish up a lot more preparation than they could have in only 3 days.

Kurono and the others didn't know how much effect the scorched earth and MPK tactics had caused on the Crusaders but the fact that the enemy had taken 1 week to reach here was important.

“I hope you have once again become aware of the fact that the enemies can take down even a rank 4 garuda easily. Do not underestimate them just because they are an army of only humans.”

Through the reports of the scout troops, the equipment, appearance and other such things about the enemy had been told to the adventurers but if they know that the enemy could even kill a high ranked monster they would be able to understand the enemy's strength even better.

Although, due to the hectic preparations, all of them here had a sense of tension and won't be careless against the human opponents.

“In the end, just what the hell was Em Pii Kay?”(T/N: Vulcan obviously doesn't know how to write MPK here since it's a game slang)

“Eh, I didn't tell?”(kuroono)

“You didn't!!”(Vulcan)

Vulcan gave a roar.

“I don't think you'd understand even if I told you though. Monster Player Killer. By taking the letters used at my home, the initials would be MPK.”

“Haa?”

“It is a tactic that involves using 'Monsters' to kill 'Players'. No need to think too deeply into it since there's no other meaning to it.”

In the first place, MPK was a type of prank (?) used in a net game that Kuroono played in his own world.

Since in that game, players couldn't attack players, there was no way for one player to kill another.

But using the traits of Active Monsters that would attack the player as long as it entered their range, they could make many monsters target themselves. And they would move towards another player who might be in a different battle or was afk while taking a break. And then that player would teleport away from the place and the monsters would end up attacking the player remaining there. And as a result, they would be killed.

By the way, one of Kuroono's friends was an expert at MPK.

Anyway, MPK tactic was a tactic influenced and adapted from such a useless game and was used to lure wild monsters and make them attack the Crusaders.

To lure the children of monsters might sound like an inhumane tactic, but luring monsters and using them as decoy wasn't problematic for the adventurers who would take any method to complete a quest. At least, it wasn't something like a taboo that might have made Vulcan and the others doubt Kurono's character and nature.

At the same time, the adventurers that kidnapped the monster children (or eggs) were made to wear the costume of Crusaders to make the enraged monster possess clear hostility towards the Crusaders that came to the village.

"The important part starts from here onwards. If the Crusaders have occupied Vato village, then that means that they will definitely come and attack this place by tomorrow." (kurono)

On Kurono's words, the adventurers realized that the decisive battle was nearing close and a sense of tension hung inside the room.

"Just now, a few enemy scouts had appeared nearby the village. The enemy will be aware that we are preparing to counter attack and are lying in wait here." (irina)

Kurono gave a slight nod to Irina's report and continued speaking.

"Probably, no, definitely, the Crusaders will attack Alsace village tomorrow morning. Bean-san, how much has the construction been completed?"

Alsace's guild master Bean, who had been appointed as in charge of the construction and fortifications, cleared his throat once with a *uohon* and began his report.

"Defences have been prepared as much as we could. Thanks to the iron barbed wires, the infantry will not have it easy invading this place, but stopping the Pegasus knights and the heavy armoured knights will be the job for you guys."

"That's enough. We'll stop both of those definitely."

On Kurono's strong reassuring answer, bean gave a hearty laugh and said that he will be depending on him.

“oo, also, the installation for that was also finished earlier.”

“By that, you mean the giant Ballista?”

In Kurono’s mind he remembered the big wagon pulled by the dwarves that was carrying the ballista that was the same ones as those on the walls of Daedalus.

“For the time being I have positioned it at the main gate so use it well.”

Kurono didn’t know from where he got something like that but Kurono decided that it would be insensitive of him to ask something like that and decided to just accept it gratefully.

“Thanks for the fantastic romantic weapon, Bean-san.” (T/N: By romance, here Kurono is referring to a man’s romance involving cool thing etc. and not the usual one.)

“What, it’s fine! Use it till it turns to waste in this battle.”

Leaving its history aside, Kurono was happy for the increase in their firepower.

He wasn’t expecting the completion of ballista on time so it was an unexpected gain but he also asked for the increase in firepower that he was expecting, that is, the [Machine gun].

“How is on Simon’s side?” (kurono)

“Ye, Yes!”

Maybe because a lot of adventurers had gathered here, Simon stood up with a nervous expression.

All gazes focused on him, and among them,

“uu..”

Lily’s hostility filled gaze was also included.

“Um, Onii-san.”

“What happened?”

“Somehow, Lily-san seems to be glaring at me.....”

“He, Hey Lily, are you still minding that!?”

“uu!!”

Seeing Lily puff up her cheeks, Kurono recalled Lily and Simon’s first meeting.

Destroying the door of the lab (storehouse), Lily walked towards Simon with max magical energy and Kurono tried to frantically stop her.

After that event, even in her child form, Lily seems to be hostile, or rather vigilant, towards Simon.

Kurono didn’t understand why Lily, who was gentle with everyone, was so severe only against Simon but he had been trying to mediate between those two, although any good result was yet to be seen.

“Sorry, continue.”(kurono)

Kurono who put Lily on his lap made an awkward expression and asked Simon to continue.

“Ah, yeah, um, for the time being, the machine gun has been completed. All that’s left is see how many barrel replacements and bullets we can procure.”(simon)

“Good job. I’ll create the bullets. As for the gun barrels, we have very few replacements so now choice but to use magic to cool it down and use them.”

In fact it was amazing, that the machine gun was completed in just one week.

“Un, as expected, we don’t have the time to create a cooling mechanism starting from now.”(simon)

“It’s enough. If we have even 2 machineguns, we can definitely stop the enemy’s advance. Mossan, you have learnt how to use the machinegun right?”

“Ou, leave to me!”

Mozrun gave a confident thumbs up. As expected of a rank 4 adventurer, he was always in a good form, so Kurono judged that he should be fine.

“Alright——“

After that, Kurono heard the reports regarding supply and replenishments and the arrangement and deployment of the members. At last he said this,

“Finally, tomorrow the enemy will come here. Since we only had a week, our defensive line had to be created in a hurry but right now, we have no choice but to endure it by ourselves.”

The last batch of refugees, that is Bean-san and others would depart today. If the enemy breaks through in 1 or 2 days all the refugees will definitely perish.

“We need to hold off the enemy here for at least 1 week. It’ll be a painful and hard battle but everyone’s life depends on us. Fight with all you’ve got!”

Kurono spoke determined words. It was unknown what the other adventurers were thinking inside their minds.

“Fight on! O!Ou!”

Lily raised her small fist and shouted.

“Ou.”

Fiona also continued after Lily with her usual expressionless face, and the next moment,

“OUU!!!”

“OOO!!!”

“OOH!!”

Every adventurer here stood up and raised a war cry.

The roaring sounds of the adventurers resounded inside the guild and their wills became one.

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2nd of Hatsuhi, from beyond the Rone river, that was slightly covered with mist, an white army wearing the flag of the Cross finally appeared.

“Is that it—-“

The one leading the vanguard of the west Daedalus occupation troops was the devout believer of the Cross, Norz Preist Head.

“It’s as per the reports. The guild building seems to have been enhanced and fortified through magic.”

The one who answered was his subordinate beside him.

“I see. I see now why the scout troops had given it the nickname ‘Black Box’. What an ominous and sinister dark building it is.”

The forest alongside the highway became thinner and the banks of the Rone river spread here. On the river, a single bridge leading to Alsace village existed.

Beyond that, as if reject any intruders, a fence of wood and bush like fence of iron wires had been created.

And close beside the main gate was the ominous black building of the guild.

“But, in the end, it’s all just for show.”

Norz felt no fear against the demons that were lying in wait for them.

No matter how many the demons have gathered, they will not be more than 300. It was a number that could not even be compared with his own troops.

With such an overwhelming difference in numbers and strength, he only needed to charge straight and break through the enemy defences with sheer numbers.

Due to the rivers, it would be difficult to complete an encirclement considering the terrain. Even if they were able to successfully surround them somehow, it would take a lot of time.

If they take too much time, they’ll end up letting the demons run away. So in the first place, they could not take a detour to cross over the rivers like usual.

Also, the cavalry is needed for pursuing the enemy so they are not normally used in attacking.

Though they had such 'constraints' , and even if the demons were not just 300 something, just with their heavy armour knights and Pegasus knights, they could easily destroy the hurriedly made defences of the demons easily.

Norz who was confident of his victory, gave the long awaited words.

"Commence attack!!"

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But fortunately, he still doesn't know.

That the hatred Kurono has for the Crusaders, his knowledge of the modern world, and the fortified guild and the Alsace defensive line would become a kill zone that bring out countless sacrifices and deaths to them.

And thus, the battle where blood was washed with blood, between the Adventurer Alliance and the Crusaders, finally began.

Kuro No Maou

- Volume 8 -

Alsace Defensive Battle

Chapter 102 - Adventurer Alliance Vs. Crusaders (1)

Receiving the attack order, the vanguards of the Crusaders, that is, the armoured knight squad started moving.

The knights in Full plate armour and tower shields along with the halberd in their hands moved together in a horizontal line. They gave off a pressure as if a wall of iron itself was approaching close.

“Don’t shoot yet. Arrows and attack magics won’t have much effect on them anyway.”

Kurono spoke to the adventurers that were standing in front of the fence with long range weapons like bows in their hands.

The heavy armoured knights had already stepped on the bridge and were clearly inside the range of the bows but Kurono still did not give the order for attacking.

“It must be the enemy’s squad with the strongest defence. As far as we know, there should not be any squad more heavily equipped than them.”

Standing beside Kurono wasn’t Lily but the eldest of the elf sisters, Irina.

All three sisters were gathered here and were pouring their magic in their bows [Sylphlight] to fire at the approaching enemy.

“By sending the heavy armoured knights first, they would probably use the infantry to attack next. They must be using them in place of castle siege weapons. Well, if it’s those knights, they definitely can breakthrough both the wooden fence as well as the barbed wire.”

If they allowed those knights to approach like this, the main gate would be easily toppled and it will open the path for the next squads.

If the gate was broken through, they will be unable to stop the enemy who possessed immense numbers and Alsace would fall by noon.

“It seems they are fortified with light magic. Also—a defensive light magic has also been deployed it seems.”

“Then neither arrows nor attack magic would have much effect like this. They really have an iron wall like defence right now.”

In Kurono’s original world, the era of armours ended with the introduction of guns.

Even if someone covered himself in iron, he won’t be able to stop a bullet. If guns became the mean weapon of the enemy, then armours would end up only as a decoration.

But with the help of magic, bullets could be deflected in this world.

Their advance would be difficult to stop with just the firepower of the Adventurer Alliance.

Fiona had told Kurono about such ranks of armoured knights that use composite Union magic to obtain an extraordinary defence.

These heavy armoured squads were able to completely defend against long range attacks to compensate for their slow movement speed.

Then what could they do? How could they stop such a squad that possessed such an immense defensive ability? It was a situation that would make everyone else think that it was over but,

“Kurono, you’re laughing.”

“Yeah.”

Kurono was laughing.

“Well I can’t help but laugh. I really didn’t think that such an amateur tactic would actually go so well—“

The knight squad had approached them much closer on the bridge. The sound of their steel heels as they marched could be heard by every adventurer here. Yes, they were currently exactly in the middle of the bridge.

“Do it. Blow up the bridge.”(kurono)

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The moment he heard that sound, Norz suddenly regretted a lot of things in his mind.

Why did he make them advance through the bridge without even checking thoroughly?

Why did the enemy choose a place like this that was surrounded by rivers to make their last line of defence?

Why, at the last moment, had he underestimated them and thought that there would be no trap?

But all these thoughts were now too late. That's why they were called as regrets. No matter how much he regretted it now, the lives lost would not be returned. Yes, the heavy knights that fell into the river would never show their silvery splendour ever again.

DODON!!

The sound of explosion roared.

"Im, impossible....."

Norz, as well as the troops waiting alongside him could not believe the scene for an instant.

The bridge on the river was supported by numerous thick pillars that would not crumble no matter how many carriages drove over it. That could be seen from a single glance.

There's no way it would have collapsed from the weight of those knights.

But those pillars had easily crumbled and collapsed along with the exploding flames that blew up.

By the time they realized it, it was already too late. The enemy had laid some kind of trick on the bridge no doubt.

Cutting some important parts, or maybe they weakened the structure itself and then destroyed the bridge at the perfect timing through the use of some kind of remotely controlled magic.

To explode something through magic like this, they either needed to draw a magic circle or attach a magic item or they could infuse energy inside a rod beyond its limit etc etc. As long as they had time and magicians, it was not impossible to do it.

“This is impossible!!!”

Norz’s shout was drowned out by the thunderous crumbling sound of the bridge.

The pieces of the bridge blew up and scattered in mid air as the armoured knights pathetically fell below.

These knights could defend against arrows, flames, lightning with their high defence but against the flowing deep river, they were totally powerless.

The tough and sturdy armour as well as the defensive light magic, both were useless if they were completely drowned. But due to the immense weight of their armour, it was impossible for a human to resurface back and he could only drown while being trapped inside their armours like a coffin.

“Ad, Advance! Save the heavy knights!!”

In front of the view of the knights drowning while trying to resist by flapping the water, Norz gave the order for rescue.

Probably, more than half will die. But, they needed to save as many as they could no matter how small the number.

That feeling did not come because he really wanted to save the lives of his subordinates. He only wanted to lessen the responsibility of letting the knights die due to his own negligence by saving at least a few knights. As various thoughts came into his mind, Norz ran towards the river leading his troops.

“Look! The ones who fell in places where the depth isn’t high are still alive! Hurry up and pull them out!!”

The Rone river did not have a despairing depth that could drown all of the heavy knights. Knights trying to desperately come towards the shore while only a small part of their helmet was above the surface, could be seen here and there.

They need to at least save those, that thought was also completely destroyed as another thundering explosive sound resounded.

“What was that sound?.....”

DODODODO a sound like a river that flowed at high speed during heavy rains came from upstream.

Impossible, every soldier thought that but the sound kept on getting louder.

The weather was absolutely clear today. It hasn't rained at all. There's no way the river water would have raised.

But, the sound only came closer.

DODODODODO!!

By the time they realized, a giant wave came and devoured everything inside the river, whether it be corpses or living ones, without any distinction.

In just a few seconds, all the knights and soldiers inside the river had completely disappeared from the river as the flow of the river settled.

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A few 100 meters upstream from the collapsed bridge, a single witch was standing.

“I wonder if that much was fine?”

It was Fiona Soleil, the member of Kurono's party [Element Master] and clumsy and reckless witch who could not control her own magical energy. She was also the reason behind the flash flood that drowned the knights in the river.

The method was very simple. Fiona had simply fired the highest level of water magic that could generate an enormous amount of water into the Rone river.

Inundating a castle normally required the creation of a dam and time to hold up water there but Fiona had created both the conditions with a single magic.

“Yeah, it worked brilliantly Fiona.”

In Fiona’s hand was a lightly shining white crystal. From it, Kurono’s voice could be heard.

Using Lily’s telepathy as a basis, this crystal could be used to talk with people who were far away instantly.

“The enemy will soon realize that there is a magician upstream so quickly return here.”

“Roger.”

After the short conversation, the crystal in Fiona’s hand broke.

Since it was an item made hurriedly without using any proper techniques and design, the time allowed for communication was small. It was a use-and-throw item.

Just because there was magic, it is impossible to create something convenient like an all purpose cell phone but for the time being it was plenty useful.

“fuu, I am not really used to using water magic.”(Fiona)

Fiona threw away her water magic enhancing wand that had become useless with a single use and started walking back towards the village as per Kurono’s orders.

“Maybe because I used an element I’m not used to, I’ve gotten hungry now. Aah, I really want to eat an ice candy right now.”

‘Didn’t you just eat breakfast?!’ Kurono’s voice could not be heard here.

Chapter 103 - Adventurer Alliance Vs. Crusaders (2)

Seeing the heavy knights drown in the river in front of them, the Crusaders' advance had completely stopped.

They actually wondered whether they should continue or not. Seeing the heavy knights being annihilated in front of them had caused them to think of retreating for now, but,

“Attack! We'll cross a river of such a level without a bridge!!”

Norz chose to attack.

“Bu, But—-“

“I'll be the vanguard! Follow me!!”

Before his subordinate could even say anything, Norz started moving towards the river.

Since the commander himself had taken the initiative and moved, the troops couldn't just stand and watch.

“Follow the Priest!”

“There are no more traps! Attack!!”

“Revenge for the knights!!”

“Kill the enemies!!”

“Kill the demons!!”

“In the name of God, exterminate the demons!”

The troops resolved themselves and jumped into the river.

After confirming the advancing soldiers, Norz gave further orders.

“Magician squad use Boost enhancements and magic shields to protect the soldiers crossing the river. Let the Pegasus Knights sortie as well!!”

Everyone of them obviously understood that they'd be defenceless while they were crossing the river.

Rather than forcing the magicians to cross as well, Norz decided that it would be better to use them to help the soldiers through Force Boost to stop them from drowning and by putting up defensive magics to protect them from long ranged attacks.

"Priest-sama, will we able to break through their gate without the magicians?"

"It's just some wooden fence and some iron wire spread out for no reason. We need neither castle siege weapons nor magicians squad to break through something like that. Once the soldiers charge, the gate will immediately fall."

Norz thought that they were lucky that this village didn't have a stone wall like Kuar.

There was huge difference between a wall of wood and one of stone. Robbers or bandits might be stopped by the wooden fence but it doesn't have the strength to stop such a number of soldiers.

"Also, I'll destroy the gate myself so there is no problem, right?"(norz)

Norz gave a confident smile towards his subordinate.

And the troops knew that it was neither a joke nor was he overestimating himself. He clearly had that much power.

The monsters that had attacked them in villages had been dealt by Norz himself after all.

The whole occupation army had already deemed Norz as a hero of great valour and strength.

"Oi, incoming!! Put in all you've got and advance!!!"

Literally, a rain of arrows came down upon Norz and the soldiers that were moving through the river.

From the other side of the protective wall, or maybe from the black guild, the demons had fired arrows from their bows.

The sound of cutting air resounded and sharp arrowheads rushed towards the troops who had no choice but to advance steadily.

“المرض ان تشار لم نزع الأب يـض ال ضوء جدار” — Light wall – Lux Wall Defence!”

Norz’s defensive magic was deployed and a shield of white light covered around 10-odd meters area around him.

Also, the defensive magic casted by the magicians on the river bank also took effect and protected the troops from the rain of arrows.

But it was unable to protect every soldier crossing the river, and those who were unlucky out of the range of the defence magic had their bodies pierced by numerous arrows.

(“Quite a lot of casualties are appearing, but, there is no other way!”)

Without even glancing towards the soldiers falling one-by-one, Norz kept on moving forward without any regrets.

When Norz and others reached the middle of the river, the depth of the water had already become a bit more than their heights, and they began to gasp as they swam while bearing the weights of their armours as well as their weapons.

From there onwards, the attack became even more violent.

Along with arrows, low level fire, ice, and wind attack magic also came raining down on them.

Seeing various elements raining down felt like as if it was a natural disaster but it was very normal for a battle in this different world. And of course, even Norz had been expecting that.

(“But still, the amount of lightning magic used is much higher.....is it a coincidence?”)

A magician could not use all the elements. Usually it’s 1 or 2 and in rare cases at most 4 elements.

The affinity of an element depended on their personal constitution and did not have anything to do with someone’s talent as a magician.

Basically, if a large amount of magicians were gathered and asked to fire together, they all will not be able to attack with the same element.

Since they are fighting with their lives on the line, it should be obvious that they would use magic that they are most used to. It was the same for even demons. Just as how a beast would use his claws and fangs, they would use the most familiar magic without any doubt.

That was what Norz was thinking but, the fact that almost half of the attacks were of lightning element, he had no choice but to rethink again.

(“No doubt the enemy is using lightning magic on purpose!”)

And the reason behind it was simple enough that even a soldier who had no knowledge of magic could understand.

“Gyaaaaa!!”

“Oi, don’t come closer to the point where it falls!”

“You goddamn idiot, do you think I can dodge inside this river!?”

“Even if it doesn’t hit directly, you’ll still be struck by electric shock!?!”

“Get, get away!! I’ll drown——”

After all, the number of soldiers falling due to lightning magic was too big.

(“The enemy is clearly aiming to shock us with electricity.”)

Norz quickly realized the intent of the enemy.

Flames would disappear when they hit the river, ice would end up floating, and wind would only raise a splash.

But lightning would affect the surrounding area as well by scattering in the water. Damage will be dealt just by being close to the point where lightning falls.

Thus, even if the soldier avoids death or fatal blow, if their limbs become paralyzed, they’d drown in the river.

Everyone could only take care of themselves and could not help each other in such a situation. In fact those who were drowning were taking other down with them as well.

In this place every single lightning magic had the same effect of a wide range attack magic.

“Shit! Damned demons! Just how long will you continue your insolent tricks!!!”

Norz shouted in anger. Behind him the pitiful sounds of those who had become unable to move and were drowning came.

(“Bear with it, we must bear with it for now! We’re almost at the opposite shore!”)

The vanguard group had already crossed the centre and could once again reach the bottom of the river with their feet.

Although, the number of victims that died from the enemy attacks or by drowning, just kept on increasing.

Also, the defensive magic of the magicians will not reach on this side. It was going to be a severe battle where they’ll have to face the enemy attacks directly with their bodies.

Still with the enemy line (goal) in sight, they moved without faltering.

(“They’re just a small force after all. Even if they attacked us inside the river, it’s still far from completely defeating us! As long as we land on the other side, we can break through their petty defences and then raise a bloodbath!!”)

The number of adventurers in Alsace village wasn’t big enough to overturn the number difference.

The amount of blood that has flowed was already too big but victory was still in their hands. Norz was still confident of that fact, that is why he didn’t even look back and kept on moving with anger.

(“Just a little bit more!”)

Only 50m were left till the opposite shore.

In the next half hour, they’ll break through the gate and will rush inside the village, Norz predicted so.

But the Crusaders still did not know that two dark magicians were lying in wait for them while holding absolute will and power in their hands.



Chapter 104 - Cross Fire

“There are quite a lot of them.”

Crossing through the river that was being rained with numerous arrows and lightning, white figures started approaching.

We had shot down a lot of them but the enemy are moving as if it didn't even affect them. I once again realized that our enemies have an incredible number of soldiers on their side.

“Say, can we really——stop that?”

Irina-san who was standing beside me while firing countless lightning arrows at once, asked me that.

Those words were filled with half doubt and half expectations.

“It'll be fine. We'll stop them definitely.”

For now I'm waiting for the enemy to enter our firing range.

“In my wor—homeland, this had changed the way of war itself. It can completely stop soldiers to charge in from the front.”

Probably. But I didn't say that. I can't use vague words at such a moment after all.

“Well whether it's true or not, we'll now in a few minutes.”

“that's true, I'm looking forward—to it!”

The enemy would completely cross the river after a few more meters.

I guess pulling them till here is enough.

“Magic Bullet Arts——“

With the black baton [Black Ballista Replica] in my hand, I pointed it towards the oncoming Crusaders.

I concentrate my magical energy as I wait to release the thousands of bullets that have been already [Loaded] inside. And soon the enemy finally entered the kill zone of my black bullets.

Filling every bullet with hatred and the will to kill, only sarcastic words came to my mind as I got ready to send them to the other world.

“Welcome to Alsace—— Sweeping fire – Gatling Burst.”

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“Terra Armour Shield!! — حماية جدار ك بير حجر صخرة منع”

Before even feeling any killing intent, Norz instinctually felt danger bells ringing inside his head.

His instinct had saved his life countless times till now and so this time as well, he let instinct rule his body as he deployed an intermediate level defensive earth magic.

A giant rock wall came out from the river bed and covered Norz’s body completely.

And the very next moment he felt bloodlust along with the sound of explosions, something bursting and getting destroyed—— and also, screams

“wh, What!?”

A lot of something ‘hard’ came and smashed against the rock wall.

Norz shouted when he realized that the rock wall’s surface was being shaved off but there was no one who could answer him.

The subordinate who had been standing right next to him till now had already become a silent corpse and had fallen.

And it was not just him. The corpses of the troops kept on rising, 2, 3, 4—in a matter of few seconds, the number of corpses had increased exponentially.

Norz finally realized that small countless black balls were being fired at them.

The pierced into the bodies of the soldiers at a high speed not traceable with the eyes of a normal human and, depending on the point where it hit, it could instantly take the life of the soldier.

“This dark element magic——no, could this be the black magic activated from the divine protection of the evil god!?!”

Peeking out slightly from the cover of his giant shield, Norz focused towards the source from where this bullet attack was coming from.

In his eyes, two jet black figures appeared, that were firing bullets towards the soldiers from the two ends of the fence while making a *giyarigiyari* systematic sound.

(“I see, so that’s the identity of the ‘Devil’ that annihilated Kievan’s squad!?”)

He didn’t know whether he was correct but to him that was how evil the image of the man dressed in full black and an evil-looking face along with the other one that had only a skull as a head looked like.

But what was more surprising wasn’t their evil appearance but the power of black magic that could create a mountain of corpses so quickly.

The man was using a baton and the skull-head was using a never before seen long tube of iron. Norz confirmed that these were the ones firing the bullets.

(“Were the soldiers who came back after running telling the truth? Could it be that they can really use insta-kill attack magic consecutively?.....”)

The countless bullets flew and easily pierced through their chainmail and gave fatal wounds.

The remnants of Kievan’s squad had certainly testified that but, Norz had only perceived it as [there is one strong adventurer there] only.

Although he regretted not thinking up any counter tactics against the ‘Devil’, he quickly changed his thoughts and focused back into the battle.

“—لحماية قوية هيئة الـ ثابت، تـ جنب Terra Defence!!”

To face those black bullets without any cover was too dangerous. Norz activated a defensive magic, although of lower level, but one that could cover the maximum area.

A wall of rock appeared from the riverbed but it was much thinner than his Terra Armour Shield and could not guarantee absolute protection against the bullets.

("Not making the magicians cross the river has backfired on me. I can't protect the troops alone.")

Numerous soldiers scrabbled over to take cover against the Terra Defence but even its covering range was also limited.

There were those who could not make it in time, those who were far away in the first place and those who unluckily got hit by bullets that pierced through even the wall and hit them. There was no end to the increase in the deaths.

("As long as we do not have a way to defend, stopping would actually increase the damages. There is no other way but to harden your resolve and keep on advancing!")

"Do not falter! Keep on charging! Attack!! We have the greater numbers; we'll settle it in an instant!!"

Norz once again raised his voice and gave the order to attack.

The soldiers had already resolved to die. If there was no way to retreat then they could only try and advance. All the soldiers understood that.

"uooooo! Attack!!"

"Aim for that black devil!!"

"Yeah, if we can kill it we'll win!!"

"Kill the devil!!"

"In the name of God!!"

"Kill the demons! Kill the Devil!!"

Stepping over the corpses of their fallen comrades, the Crusaders advanced while raising their shouts.

“Yeah! Advance!!”

After confirming that the soldiers had started to attack, Norz also resolved himself to move.

“— حماية قوية هبة ال ثابت، ت جنب” — Protect Boost

Putting the minimum defence enhancement on his body, the moment he was about to get out of the cover,

ZUGAN!!

The giant shield was pierced by something and the shock blew Norz towards the rear.

“Guhaaa!!!”

Within his faint consciousness, he saw the two giant black logs that had pierced his giant shield and he also saw the ‘device’ used to launch the logs.

“A Ballista?Why, do they have something like”

“Priest-sama!”

“Priest-sama was shot!!?”

The shouts of the troops felt very distant to Norz.

“Don, Don’t be flustered, I’m fine.....”

He realized that two soldiers were supporting him but his vision was spinning around as if he was drunk and he couldn’t even make out their faces.

“Don’t mind me, Go, retreat is not——”

While his consciousness became even fainter, in the skies above, he clearly saw countless shadows even then.

“——The Pegasus Knights have arrived. With this, we’ll win.....”

As Norz gave a smile, he let go of his consciousness.

With soldiers attacking from the ground and the Pegasus knights attacking from the air, the defence of Alsace protected by the Devil will definitely fall.

Norz was still sure of his victory.

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“Amazing! This really is an amazing weapon!!” (mozrun)

Mozrun was excited as he fired the machinegun supported on a carriage.

His appearance was definitely like a death god and now that he had taken so many lives, he truly could be called a reaper.

“Take that! Good job coming from the other side of the sea just to die!!”

Hiyaha!! His hyena like laugh didn’t suit the image of a death god at all though.

But the machinegun was clearly the weapon of a death god that could take lives in an instant. Also only he, a dark magician could make use of this.

Kurono had requested Simon to make a machinegun but in this different world where neither science and tech nor the machine industry had been developed, they could never make a machine gun similar to that of what exists on Earth.

What Kurono wanted was a substitute magic for his [Magic Bullet Arts]. He wanted to build a weapon that would rapid fire bullets with magic and not with gunpowder.

In short, this was Magic Staff based on a machine gun. In the first place, [Guns] were only of such type in this world.

It’s appearance was only like a box with a grip from which a barrel tuck out. From Kurono’s pov it was a very ill-formed gun. But its inside was built with a magic similar to Kurono’s [Magic bullet arts] which made rapid firing of bullets possible.

And the only one who could use this magic technique was the dark magician Mozrun who had the most similar type of magic to Kurono's black magic.

"Mu! No good, the barrels heated up. Quickly, change it!!"(mozrun)

""Yes!""

2 goblins quickly started to replace the barrel of the machine gun.

Thanks to the practice done just for this day, they were able to work very smoothly.

In the first place, the magic formula behind the machinegun was – 'to cover the technique equations with actual materials/substance'.

For example, the gun barrel had the effect of deciding the bullet's direction and stability of the trajectory.

When you think of firing bullets with magic, one has to put magical energy and concentration to fix the above aspects as well before using the magic itself.

By using the 'substance' called gun barrel, the amount of techniques and formulas required were lessened.

The [Staff] that is the weapon of a magician was meant to reduce the burden on the caster. This machinegun was also made with the same effect in mind.

Kurono's [Magic Bullet Arts] were made with an image of gun in mind in the first place. Conversely speaking, if a 'shape' like a gun was also given, most of the formulations could be left out.

The magic effects required to fire the machinegun are 'loading the bullet' and 'a force to be used in place of gunpowder'.

The bullets are 'summoned' directly inside the chamber and then all that's left is to use dark magic to bring out enough pressure to fire the bullet directly out of the barrel.

Mozrun could exhibit both these magic effects well which is why he could use the machinegun to display the same destructive strength as Kurono.

By the way, since the part of firing the bullet is done through magic, there is no trigger even though it's a gun.

"Boss, how's it over there?"(mozrun)

Since Lily's telepathy was currently covering all the area in the surrounding of the main gate, anyone could freely talk as long as they were in the area.

Mozrun communicated with Kuroono who was many meters away.

"I can still keep on firing. What about you?"

"I can make bullets but the barrels are exhausting very fast. I won't last too long like this."(mozrun)

"I guess that problem would come considering how hurriedly we created it. But right now we have no other choice. Use them as much as you can without destroying it by cooling them."

"Leave it me! I might not look like it but I'm pretty damn good at economising!"

Ahhahha. Kuroono gave a wry smile as he heard Mossan's usual cheerful laugh.

""The barrel has been changed Mozrun-san!!""(goblin)

"A'right! Then let's start firing back again!!!"(mozrun)

He once again clasped the grip and started a full burst against the advancing army.

Crusaders that attacked with a tremendous number; the only reason they could not come any closer was due to Kuroono and Mozrun were holding the line through their Cross firing.

That idea came from the time when Kuroono had single-handedly killed over a 100 soldiers of Kievan's squad at Irz village. Although at that time he was under the berserk state due to the cursed hatchet, his memories of that time were still vivid.

After Kuroono became the leader, when he was using his almost nil experience to think up plans, he once again realized the tremendous effect 'shooting' had against them.

To have been able to kill more than a 100 soldiers alone was due to simple advantage that a gun had over a sword.

And so he thought, that if he was able to prepare even one more machinegun like attacking method, they could use 'crossfire' to efficiently kill the advancing troops of the enemy.

Cross fire was called so because two machineguns were used in a line that their target range intersected at a point. It was a tactic that was very efficient when defending.

This tactic had first appeared during World War 1 but was also used in the Russo-Japanese war as well, or so Kurono remembered.

And the same scene was once again revived here in this Alsace defensive battle as well.

The distance to the other shore was left was only about 10 meters. But it was distance that no one was able to cross to.

Legs getting trapped in the flow of the river, the speed of the river's flow made running almost impossible and made the distance to the other shore much greater.

But still, the soldiers kept on advancing without even knowing the fact that until this rain of black bullets stopped, they would not be able to even get to the other shore.

Chapter 105 - The Sniper Alchemist

The adventurer guild nicknamed black box by the Crusaders was currently acting like a powerful war tower that was launching numerous arrows on the enemy.

Except the [Three Hunting Princesses], almost every adventurer that could use a bow was currently stationed at the guild.

Due to that, the ones standing at the gate and using the bows to attack the oncoming Crusaders from the front were actually swordsmen and warriors.

Thanks to that, the skilled archers could position themselves in high places suitable for aiming at the enemy and could focus solely on providing cover fire as they were protected by the blackened guild.

And, on the rooftop of the guild, where most of the archers were positioned, an even higher pedestal was kept on which stood Simon along with a long sniper rifle.

"2'o clock, distance 380, from the appearance looks like a squad commander, no shield."

Beside him, the rank 4 thief slime Susu was acting as the observation supporter.

Along with the job as a supporter, she was also acting as the gun's scope as well.

By turning her arm back to the normal slime form, and adjusting the composition of that transparent substance, she created a lens that could magnify far off objects like a binocular.

This transformation by using her Extra magic was used by Simon as a scope for sniping.

".....I see him."

The figure of a defenceless magician chanting a spell reflected in his view.

The man, who was guessed to be the squad commander of the magician squad, was unable to realize till the last moment that he was being aimed at

from the top of the guild building on the other side of the shore. His head was blown away and his chanting was interrupted for an eternity.

“Got him in one shot again. You really have good skill.”

“Not really. It’s the gun that’s amazing……but, thank you.”

Simon replied blushing to the compliment he was not really used to listening.

The gun Simon was using right now was also one that was hurriedly constructed from the day he met Kurono but its power and performance was much higher than anything he had used before.

In the first place, Kurono had assigned only 2 duties to Simon. The first was the manufacture of the machinegun and the other was for him to participate in the battle as a sniper.

Going back in time, this happened after Kurono somehow made explanations to the angered Lily who had barged into the laboratory and had sent her back.

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“Say, Onii-san, tell me more about the guns in your homeland.”

The one who spoke first was Simon.

It was the weapon he had created with all his skills, and now he had been told that there were similar types somewhere else as well. There was no way he wouldn’t be curious.

“yeah, alright, um, where should I start——”

Since they didn’t have the time to talk leisurely, Kurono concisely gave an explanation regarding guns.

Kurono explained about how , at his homeland (earth), guns were the main weapons in armies, how they were shaped and their structures and also how guns could take many more lives than a sword.

Well, Kurono wasn't trying to preach Simon about the dangers of a gun though. What he wanted at that time was a powerful gun instead.

"There are three improvements you can do right now. One is to attach a stock, second is to apply some rifling in the barrel, and ---"

Kurono activated his magic bullet arts on his fingertip and placed a black bullet made out of magical energy in front of Simon.

"Last is to use my bullets."

"This is, the same bullet that Onii-san used with his magic just now right?"

"Yeah. Although I can't make gunpowder, I can make countless steel warheads. If you could apply Eternity property on them, they would last for numerous days and we can create more than creating bullets from scratch."

"But without gunpowder, it won't fire. I'm not a magician. The gunpowder I'm using right now is a fire-type magic stone. It's not something very cheap."

Even if the effect was same, the raw materials for gunpowder were different in the different world it seems.

But to Kurono, the change in raw materials wasn't something to be concerned with. All that was needed was to fire the bullet properly. Thus the only part he needed to concern with was the procurement of the gunpowder mentioned by Simon, but,

"Magic stone?"

Kurono had no idea what it was.

But Simon didn't really think too much about it and continued speaking.

"I'm talking about that red gem that can be seen on top of fire staves usually. You do know that Magic staves are much higher in price than swords, right? With the amount I have, buying even a single one is a bit doubtful."

The reason why Kurono, a magician, did not know about [magic stones] was because he never really had the need or chance to buy magic staves.

By the time he registered as an adventurer, he had already gotten the [Black Ballista Replica] so there was no need to buy another staff. In the first place, Irz village's item shop didn't have a black magic or a dark magic staff.

But still, he had seen magic staves many times and also understood its structure so he could quickly understand what part referred to the magic stone.

But, it's not necessary that a magic staff would definitely use a magic stone, but that's a different matter altogether.

"Then, how many magic staves would you need to have sufficient gunpowder?"(kuroono)

"If I have 10 of them then I'll have enough till the next year, but seriously, that's asking too—"

"Then I'll prepare 10 for you."

"——what?"

"What, is that not sufficient?"

"That's not it! How will you prepare 10 of them!?!"

"Well, we can use anything left in the village freely after all. We should find enough if we search the weapon shop's storehouse, right?"

"What's with that bandit-like thought process!? Isn't that robbery!?"

Well that might be true but for Kuroono who had gone as far as to use scorched earth tactics, he had absolutely no hesitation in using any 'resources' available to them.

Simon felt unease looking at Kuroono's 'Use all that is available' attitude.

"I'll let you have the preference in using the things in the village. Also, you'll need a smithy to create guns as well right? I'll prepare one of that for you as well."

To Simon who had been only able to do research with his small budget, it was a too attractive of an offer.

"I'll be in your care then!"

As a result, Simon decided not to mind the trifling details and started with the manufacturing of the gun.

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And what he had created was probably the first ever Sniper Rifle in this world called [Yatagarasu] that he used to deal head shots one after the other to the enemy magicians.

By the way, the naming was done by Kurono.

“At my homeland, the gun used by the head of mercenary long ago was called [Yatagarasu].”

When he heard the name, Simon somehow instantly liked it and accepted it.

(“This [Yatagarasu] is really an amazing gun. Thanks to Onii-san’s advices, I was able to make something of this level.”)

Simon’s prided gun was still firing bullets from its muzzle and was shooting the enemy magicians down.

As expected, it was still a single shot type but Simon who had an immaculate aim had a kill count higher than anyone on this rooftop.

(“But not yet, there’s still room for improvement in this gun. Even the machinegun should be able to fire without the use of magic as well.”)

From the day he met Kurono, his head had become filled with all sorts of new research.

That was how invaluable the information and knowledge brought by Kurono was for Simon.

(“That’s why I can’t die here. I have too many things that I still want to build! I’m not going to be killed by some men who appeared out of nowhere!!”)

Simon's survival instincts were working stronger than ever before. But in contrast to the hot and passionate thoughts, he was still coolly and calmly shooting down every target.

"n, that's—"

"What is it?"

The one who recognised 'that' the earliest was Susu.

"The Pegasus Knights have appeared. At 11'o clock. Can you see them?"

Looking through the slime lens scope, the figures of the Pegasus Knights flying over the forest far away could be seen.

"There are.....more than we thought."

"Yes, but, we have no choice but trust right now."

".....yes."

Once again clutching the grip, Simon once again showed maximum concentration.

He still did not need to face against the Pegasus Knights. He just needed to kill as many magicians as he can right now.

The fearsomeness of the Pegasus Knights had been heard from a lot of adventurers. But Simon did not feel any fear towards the Pegasus Knights approaching this place right now.

That's because the one who was going to face those Pegasus Knights was the even more fearsome 'Fairy'.

Chapter 106 – Fairy vs. Pegasus Knights

In a certain room of the guild, Lily was sitting alone on the floor.

Just outside the thin walls a battle is taking place and a lot of blood is flowing on streets. Naturally, the great noise is also reaching that room too but strangely, inside the room was an atmosphere screaming 'Dead Silence'. That is something the figure of Lily sitting on top of a shining magic circle with her eyes closed might be making the atmosphere.

She is playing the role of communicator between adventurers through the magic circle through which she is using the Telepathy magic.

And that role of hers is soon going to end.

"Lily, I think you have heard already, the Pegasus Knights are here."

"Yea."

Kurono's voice resounds in Lily's head.

Understanding the meaning of the words, Lily speaks a word of affirmation and nods with her small head.

"I will cut off the Telepathy from now on, change to 'analogue' communication methods."

The moment after Kurono gave these orders to every adventurer, the telepathy network disappeared.

Right now only Kurono and Lily can talk through telepathic means.

"Sorry Lily, I gave you the most difficult role."

"No way, it's alright."

A pure reply, without any sarcasm.

Lily takes the Queen Beryl placed on floor in front of her.

"I leave it up to you, Lily."

By the time Kurono's faith filled words reached in her head,

"Yeah, just leave it to me."

The little girl was no longer there, all that stood was a beautiful girl with long, slender and well-proportioned body. [ET: First time author wrote good words]

Lily, who took the power from Queen Beryl, takes action to complete her role.

“Just wait Kurono, I’ll beat those ‘sluts covered with feathers’ soon enough.” Those words were said after cutting off the telepathy, so there is no chance they will ever reach to Kurono.

And he also had no way of knowing, the gruesome smiling face full of bloodlust of Lily.

“I’ll try hard, so you have to praise me later, Kurono”

Lily opened the window, spread out her rainbow-colored wings and flew up in the bright sky.

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The Pegasus Knight Troop is made up from females only. That is the same in Arc Continent and Pandora Continent.

That is because the in the Pegasus tribe, only the females (sluts) have feathers. And except some rare cases, the ones who ride on them are also females (sluts).

The Pegasus Knight Troop under Norz heading towards the Alsace Village was also made up by females only.

Below them the infantrymen were losing their lives easily due to cross fire.

“Seems like the rumour of the ‘devil’ is a truth.”

The girls are flying in the sky in a splendid formation. They are not in the range in which their words can reach other, but due to them each having a telepathic magic item they can talk with each other while flying with no problems.

The magic item that lets others talk with each other in their minds in real time comes at a very high price, but the class called as ‘Pegasus Knight’ have more than enough value to have them.

“How horrible they are, I can see the bloodied river from here.”

“If we don’t support them, we will only have more useless casualties.”

“Really? I don’t care if it’s a devil or crap, but I really don’t think that this sort of attack will keep on continuing.”

“Isn’t that alright, to just let the men keep on attacking? Soon enough they will break through that gloomy forest.”

“That’s right, the infantry are expendable assets after all, just let them have their way.”

“Shut your mouth, though only we can hear us, that is problematic statement.”

“Ye~s”

The girls’ voices were not filled with any tension while heading to the battle field where a lot of their comrades have died.

That was neither because of no fear of death nor faithfulness to mission.

That was because the difference between infantrymen and Pegasus Knights. In the first place the defensive power of Pegasus Knight is at another level compared to infantrymen. Infantrymen will die from an arrow or two but that is something impossible with Pegasus Knight.

The armour of the girls are enchanted with boosts such as ‘Light weight’, ‘Force’ and ‘Concentrate’.

Only the elite soldiers expert in martial arts magic can wear such high-class armour.

The infantrymen are incomparably inferior in armour and even skills. In the battlefield the possibility of the girls returning alive is obvious. None of them are thinking that hostility from the attacks going on below them that have killed a lot the soldiers can kill them too.

“—But , you girls are going to die here.”

That time, the voice of a beautiful girl is heard.

No, heard is not the right word here that is because it resounded directly inside their minds.

“Who is it!?”

The captain of Pegasus Knights notices that the enemy, a demon has appeared.

“My name is Lily. Welcome to Alsace village and goodbye.”

The voice of the beautiful girl the girls heard was transparent and beautiful but all were mixed with malice, enmity and bloodlust.

“Stay vigilant, we might be targeted——”

“Ufufu, foolish person.”

The Pegasus Knight Troop takes battle stances, and Lily's voice ridicules them.

"Meteor Strike."

Above the Pegasus Knight Troop, cutting through the clouds, a rainbow coloured light appears.

A scene that looks like a star is falling down in the night sky.

The high speed light draws near the Pegasus Knights as if it has its own consciousness.

"From above you say!?"

The attack Pegasus Knights have to stay vigilant for is the anti-aircraft magic attacks from the surface. The only ones that can attack from above them are Pegasus Knights, Dragons or else some sort of flying monster.

During a battle it is very rare for the existences of those who can go above Pegasus Knight to appear. And it is unthinkable that the poorly made demon army would have an existence like that.

That's why they are only vigilant of surface attacks. The only time they can die is the time they will cross swords with demons.

That is how it was supposed to be, but the reality completely betrayed their expectations. A massive meteor is heading towards them from above having unbelievable mass and destructive power.

The attack came at them when they were not on guard and has closed its distance so much that they cannot evade it anymore. They deploy the strongest defensive magic they can in the short amount of time.

An intermediate level defensive magic is deployed boasting of great defensive power. In addition both the attack and defensive magic are light so their compatibility is not bad, that's why it will be easy to block.

'We can break through it, we will definitely break through it', the Pegasus Knight Troop leader thinks as such while heading towards the collision time between both parties.

"Ahahaha! Waste, waste, waste!!"

The rainbow coloured meteor light and white coloured shield.

The girls believed they were evenly matched in this contest of magic but the shield is smashed to pieces after a few moments from the impact and becomes a part of the seven coloured mass of light.

And the rainbow coloured light engulfs the captain along with some Pegasus Knights and explodes in the mid-air.

The explosion sound and shock wave from blast jolts the bodies of all the remaining Pegasus Knights.

“No way, Captain—”

“Hey, you’re lying, right!?”

“What the hell is that power! Unbelievable!!”

The traces of the people engulfed in the blast are now not present on the face of world. The flesh and blood left of some cannot be distinguished between human or otherwise.

The numerous pieces of bloody meat scatter far away in the sky and fall down to the ground.

Now there is no trace of the girls in the explosion, the only thing left is the blood, some meat and the remains of magical power.

“Quiet down! I, the Vice Captain will take the right to command, the enemy is above the clouds, take the interception stance—”

“I see, so you’re the next boss.”

At that time, for the first time the Pegasus Knights saw the figure of the girl named Lily.

The girls of Pegasus Knights mostly made up of beautiful girls were themselves entranced by her. The platinum blond hair, the juicy white body, and the beautiful emerald green eyes that can charm anyone regardless of gender.

The figure of her floating wearing a jet-black cloth and the two pairs of rainbow coloured wings closely resembles the image of the Fairies Princess that appears in the fairy tales.

But the girls soon return to their senses, as they recognise her as the enemy that deployed a powerful magic that killed their captain along with some comrades of theirs.

And, more than anything else.

“Wh- When did she—”

“Nh, I came just now.”

Lily was standing on the back of a Pegasus behind the Vice Captain as if holding her from behind.

The ‘enemy’ is already in front the girls. In their hearts filled with fighting spirit and enmity, fear is spreading, and it’s impossible to tell which emotion is dominant.

“Deploy Oracle Field.”

Lily while putting her hands on the shoulders of vice captain activates the extra magic the fairies boast of.

The pale green coloured light is a magic for protection from outside attacks, but it’s not for protecting those inside it.

Lily has not the least intention to save the enemy, in other words the humans, so she is using this barrier as a deadly weapon. [ET: Finally Yandere & maybe Sadistic Lily’s Killing Spree]

The vice-captain suddenly realises the abnormality that has happened to her while being captured in the barrier of a radius of 2 metres.

“What is this, hot—”

Inside the Oracle Field is full of high heat. And that so, that can melt the arrowheads of more than 100 arrows in a second.

That heat has far surpassed the temperature any existence can live in.

“Aaaaa—”

While feeling the heat that can melt the body from inside Lily’s hand, the vice-captain takes her leave from world.

The skin is heinously burned and in the next moment turns into ashes.

The figure of the beautiful Pegasus Knight is now nowhere to be seen.

The only thing left is the corpse of a Pegasus which has only the legs and armour left, all other things are burned and have turned into ashes already.

“Now then—”

The Pegasus that has died by fire and has only armour and bones left no has no more power to keep on flying in air, and by following the gravity’s order falls down.

Lily pays no attention to the person that was present in her hands just some moments before as if she has completely forgot her existence and has no interest in her at all.

“If you guys are going to surrender obediently, I will leave it at this. Of course, I’ll guarantee your safety.”

Lily asks the Pegasus Knights while her face makes a bewitching smile.

“Then, decide fast about what you’re gonna do—”

“Don’t underestimate us, damn brat!!” [ET: Oh Crap! Blood War now! Hyu Hyu]

Along with the abuse, the Line Sagita flies towards Lily.

“Did you think we, the Pegasus Knights will surrender by getting scared of a single damn fairy!?”

The Oracle Shield completely repels the arrow; Lily did not suffer even the damage at the level of static electricity.

“I see, so that’s your answer.”

The Pegasus Knights ready their spears and spread out while taking battle stances.

This time the Pegasus Knight which declared the war takes the right to command.

Having the two main heads gone will neither diminish their fighting spirit nor cooperation. They are not called an elite squad for no reason.

Lily raises her head and glares at them while clicking her tongue as if saying ‘Ah, so much hassle to take care of them all.’

“Well then I’ll kill you all....Be prepared you ‘sluts with feathers.’”

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“Don’t underestimate us, fucking brat!!”

One of the Pegasus Knights, Ester, moves her hands and mouth before she even thinks.

The chantlessly made Line Sagita flies towards the fairy named Lily.

“We won’t get scared by a shitty fairy.”

Line Sagita hits Lily, but even Ester knows that a lower grade attack magic cannot kill Lily, who has killed many Pegasus Knights.

"I'll definitely kill her here, is that alright!"

She asks everyone through Telepathy and came back 4 replies immediately.

"I agree with you Ester, I'll follow you."

"I also agree! I'll take the revenge for Captain!"

"Eh, you won't stop?"

"Let's go back"

The replies from every squad leader were in agreement and disagreement both in the ratio of 50:50.

"Then retreat, Camy and Cathy are rear guard unit."

"We have to take revenge!"

"Yea, yes, let's join our powers and fight!"

The opposing parties also, in the end agreed with them.

They can kill her by throwing attack magic at her from left and right, up and down.

But that is only when the opponent is a human.

"Lower grade attack magic is only for stopping her movements for some time, we can't kill her until we've stuck our spears into her. Franc and Maty, don't let her escape, cover us, and also stop her from chanting or else something terrible will only come towards us. Camy and Cathy will attack with me, get ready! "

""Understood.""

"Eh, Eeeh, why are we in the assault group!!?"

"It really is super scary!"

"You foolish sisters are only good in attack, that's why!"

"Ehh, what's that, complete discrimination."

"Even I am only good in martial arts and am a muscle-brain"

"Stop spouting rubbish! Want to get down to ground from here by falling, huuh!!"

"Yes, yes, got it."

"It's good if we go, right?"

Ester, Cathy and Camy start moving their squads for attacking.

“Regret it that you have pick up a fight with us, you damn single fairy bastard!”

And so the battle between a single fairy and many Pegasus Knights started, 100 metres above Alsace village.



Chapter 107 – Soldier's Role

“No good!? The gun barrel is overheated! It won't shoot unless it's cooled down.”

Kurono after hearing this message, he thought 'Finally, the time had come.' He knew from the start that the cross fire will not keep on continuing for always, some crusaders who are unhurt will reach near the unreliable protective wall.

“Understood, Mossan is to be on standby till the cooldown time is over and after it's complete, immediately start firing.”

The adventurer given the role of messenger, runs towards Morzun to relay the message given by Kurono.

After giving the instructions, Kurono stops his Gatling Burst and takes a deep breath.

Along with taking the breath, Kurono shouts with determination.

“Open the gates! I'm going outside!!”

That voice was heard by the adventurers standing near the gates and even by the archers confined in the Guild.

“Ooooouuuu!!”

The loud war cry by the adventurers gives the answer to Kurono's command.

Particularly, the adventurers standing near the main gates were boiling with more excitement due to them eagerly waiting to cross swords with the enemy.

Seeing the large number of enemy heading towards them caused their blood to boil strongly rather than being intimidated.

“Hahahaha! Finally our time to show off!!”

In front of main gates, is the platoon made from strong swordsmen and warriors starting with Vulcan as their head.

They are, the reckless platoon which will jump out of gates and kill of the enemy.

The platoon is made up from many different species such as human, beast-man, elves, lizard-men, orc and golem.

But they are all waiting impatiently for the gates to open.

Before anyone knew it, Kuroono was already in front of them with the 'HaraRetsu' in his hands.

"Listen well everyone, this is the first turning point.

We have buy time for the cross fire to restart, during that time protect this line of defense at all costs."

It's not much of a problem to cool down the barrel with ice and fire magic.

But the problem is to keep on repeating it as fast as possible for the firing to keep on continuing.

This maintenance is the most important, they can't just destroy the machine gun on the first day. They have to keep on using it for the battles coming tomorrow and day after tomorrow for stopping the enemy.

"Let's go—"

Kuroono wears his robe, and faces towards the main gate that is about to open.

"Assault!!"

The sound of door opening and the war cry of adventurers resound simultaneously.

The platoon made up of 24 people jumps at the crusaders coming towards at them like some wild animals that have been freed from a cage.

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Kuroono's orders reach to the ears of sniping pair of Simon and Susu encamped on top of guild.

"Assault already.....If I had time, I would've made a more decent gun barrel."

Simon understands that this assault is to buy time for the restart of cross fire.

Conversely speaking, if the gun barrel can keep on firing, then there is no need to take risk and assault.

Simon regrets the fact that he couldn't complete a more durable gun barrel and due to that they have to add such a high-risk assault plan to buy time.

When the gun barrel was complete, Kurono gave him the words of praise and gratitude that 'It's well made', but he doesn't think that his work is worthy of that praise.

"But, there is no time to regret right now, let's start our next job."

Susu speaks those words as if she had guessed Simon's heart and returns her slime hand which had been acting as a scope till yet back to human hands.

"Yes!"

Simon removes his hand from 'Yatagarasu' and stands up from his sniping position.

Originally, they had to go down from the pedestal using the ladders, but

"It's better to hurry up, jump off like this"

"Eh?"

Before Simon knew it, Susu took Simon in her arms and dived from the pedestal together.

The height of pedestal is just 3 metres, therefore, before Simon could say anything they both landed on the roof of guild.

Simon didn't notice since there was no shock of landing felt.

"T-Thank you very much....."

For the time being, she just gave words of gratitude.

"We're on our own from now on, be careful Simon. Especially since some of the Pegasus Knights might come inside." [ET: She doesn't know my favourite Yandere Lily's power.]

"Yes, Susu-san should also be careful."

"You don't need to worry about me. I'm a thief, so even if I went to the front line, the enemy won't realise my presence at all."

'That is the skill of assassin not a thief' Simon wanted to say that but stops because there is no time for useless talks.

"Well then, see you later"

"Yes"

After saying those words, Susu jumps off from the rooftop of guild.

She looks like a human but don't be disillusioned she in truth she is slime. If she returns her hands and legs to slime form then she can climb on the walls as easily as if walking on road.

Simon thinks while seeing his running off that he can do such a thing without any rope or martial arts skills or magical assistance.

"Alright then, I also have to give cover fire for Onii-san and others."

Simon starts running while shouldering his gun. He ran towards the ideal position for sniping above the main gate of guild.

Till now he had been sniping the enemy magicians but now her role is to do cover fire to support the assault platoon.

The targets are right besides guild building, so she doesn't need the scope, in other words Susu as a spotter.

(The commanding officer of enemy can use lower-grade magic too, eliminating him is top priority.....)

Simon decides his main target for sniping and once again set up the 'Yatagarasu' while standing on the rooftop. [ET: For those not understanding it....the guild's rooftop is really long and he was running on it till before.]

The ones he will be shooting are not on the other side of shore but right below the guild.

"I don't feel like missing a target at this distance."

Without any hesitation Simon pulls the trigger, and the bullet flies towards her target.

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I haven't had any close combat after fighting that priest in Irz Village.

I still don't think I'm cut out for close combats.

(Chop, Chop—Kill—Chop, Blood, Kill —Death, Kill, Chop, Chop Chop Chop)

"And you remain the same, eh?"

Thanks to the bloodlust being transferred to me from the HaraRetsu in my right hand, I'm not feeling even a bit of nervousness.

Sure enough, it's odd to have a relaxation effect from a curse, but there is not time to think about that because the enemy is heading towards me. The Crusaders are coming separately so as to not meet the same fate as that of the soldiers that started marching first.

But still, their numbers are hell lot more than the number of people that came to conquer Irz Village.

They are full of vigor due to being covered by the white shadow while crossing the river.

"Really great, I will give you more than enough blood to drink for you to evolve one more time."

For the time being, I have no other choice than to keep on killing them starting from the ones in front.

After closing a lot of distance between the enemy, I load the magic power and increase the physical power in leg and leap in one spurt.

I jump above the spears they are attacking with and attack at their heads while being in mid-air.

"Black Calm!!" [ET: Attack name!][SK: Kuronagi sounds cooler really]

I release martial art in mid-air and cut the heads of soldiers in 3 pieces.

The heads and chainmail both get cut cleanly without any resistance. As always this does have really terrific cutting ability.

The blade emits a resonance as if being delighted to taste blood after 1 week of wait.

I land in front of the three headless corpses and head towards the centre of the enemy. They suddenly cover me from all directions without leaving any gaps.

The soldiers after sensing I have closed a lot of distance between them already, throw the spear and don the broadsword hanging on their waist. But those movements seem really slow to me.

Now that I think about it, I have killed 10 high-class soldiers when escaping from institute and that so very easily. In that case, the soldiers in front of me who haven't learnt either magic or martial arts skills, in other words 'normal human being' don't have any advantage other than the difference in numbers.

While the soldiers are taking their swords from their scabbard, I chop them all together.

The 'HaraRetsu' just like its name says, cuts the stomach of the soldiers cleanly and scatters the blood and entrails.

After I cut off some soldiers covering me, the left soldiers finally take out their swords.

"Die you Devil!!"

Everyone speaks the words of revenge and start to assault me.

Even for this hatchet, it's impossible to kill many people coming at me in one swing.

They attack at me in large numbers—but, I have already learned how to cope up with attacks like these during the mobility experiments.

"'Shadow Gate' 'Sword Arts'"

A black shadow spreads below my feet and a jet black sword appears from it.

"—Pierce Through"

10 blackened swords are deployed and fly towards the soldiers coming to attack me.

Without even looking at all soldiers that are in my blind spots of vision, I somehow know that my swords have pierced through them.

Though I'm not moving my hands but I'm controlling the swords, So the sensation of cutting gets transferred in my mind.

The soldiers coming at me all get purged and now I can finally concentrate on new enemies coming at me from front.

I jump to the interior of the spear that is pushed towards me and cuts the soldier diagonally from shoulder.

After killing him, I realise that after 10 seconds from landing, the impact I have given the soldiers by killing all the soldiers coming at me from all directions is massive.

The soldiers point their spears at me and are standing in the deadlock position which is just some metres away from me.

"This damn Devil—Uoooo!!"

After breaking the silence of some seconds, a single soldier extends his spear from right behind me.

But the 10 swords that have been released from Sword Arts are still in good condition and so deal with the attack that is coming from behind me in a flash.

I don't have to look back, just instruct a single sword to fly towards the soldier at my back.

The speed of my sword piercing through the soldier's chest is more than the speed of his spear coming towards my back.

Raising a voice of agony, one more soldier falls down.

As if the soldier got cold feet, they moved even further back and then encircle me.

"If you're not coming, then I'm coming."

Having hatchet in my left hand, and the baton in right, while having 10 blackened swords protecting my back, I take a step forward.

Having the HaraRetsu that can cut clean even the defensive magic, while deploying Bullet Arts that can rapid-fire like a machine gun and having 10 swords from Sword Arts that cover my blind spots. I can easily fight against many enemies by alone.

I am a magician, So it's natural for me to do close-combats with the support of magic too.

It didn't work with Sarel, but it will work out with normal soldiers until I pass out by the lack of magical power.

"Don't let them break!!"

For now, it's more than enough to hold down the enemy at front lines as an adventurer.

Trampling the corpses of soldiers, I deploy all the swords I have towards the soldiers remaining in my surroundings.

Chapter 108 - Fairy Vs. Pegasus Knights (2)

The wings of a Pegasus did not just flap like a bird to fly.

By the laws of physics, a pair of wings was not enough to make a horse fly. Not to mention that it could even fly at high speeds.

But in this different world, it was a reality that the Pegasus could carry humans and move in mid air well enough to battle. This was because in this world the power known as magic exists.

If you were to say that Pegasus flew because of magic, then those wings were the magic, the device that allowed them to fly.

The Pegasus Knights had casted [Speed Boost] on the wings which allowed them to fly at even faster speeds.

“Speed Boost – أَسْرَعُ لَ تَشْغِيلُ الِ قَدَمِ سُرْعَةً خِلَالِ مَنْ يَ عَمَلُ”

As Estel and the others in the vanguard used their magic, the Pegasus's speed increased instantly and reached a level that could not be followed by normal men.

The fact that they had not gotten out of their formation even at such a high speed was the proof that these girls were extremely skilled at riding their Pegasus and had incredible teamwork as a squad.

The girls looked like a swarm of meteors in the sky and Lily who was releasing light looked like a star.

“Purple Lightning Assault – Line Charge!!”

Estel released her martial art against Lily who was inside her Oracle Field.

If that skill had hit a normal human, his whole upper half of the body would have been completely blown away. That was how high levelled martial skill it was.

The giant lance enveloped in lightning was launched with a tremendous force.

Estel's lightning and Lily's light clashed. The sound and light of countless sparks flew.

After firing her attack at Lily, Estel decelerated as the speed boost ran out and clicked her tongue while on top of her Pegasus.

“It’s too hard, Damnit!”

Her attack could only graze the outer layer of the Oracle field and had come nowhere near Lily’s white soft skin.

Obviously, the lightning attack had been completely defended against. From behind Estel, another wave of lightning sounds came. The other Pegasus Knights also used the same skill one by one.

Probably only 3 or 4 of them hit including her own attack. Rest all had been evaded. Estel figured that out without even looking back.

A hard defence along with great evading ability was not something that could be easily dealt with. Not just Estel, but every Pegasus knight here was thinking the same thing.

After finishing their attacks, Estel’s group turned in the air and once again set their sights at Lily. They noticed that the part of the Oracle Field that had been scratched and slightly damaged, quickly regenerated and became as good as new.

“So she even has regenerative abilities? Damned monster—“

As if not allowing to even curse her, Lily fired beams of light. Seeing that, Estel quickly pulled the reins and took evasive actions.

She skilfully dodged the beam that held enough heat and power that getting hit by even one of those would not end with just a few burns.

Estel wasn’t the only one who was being targeted; everyone in her group was attacked by the beams without any discrimination. But only Estel could dodge all the beams. The rest of the knights were all shot countless times.

As expected of the armour that had been loaded with defensive magic, they didn’t become unable to fight just by getting hit from one or two beams as long as they guarded in time, but damage was clearly accumulated on their bodies.

(“Shit Shit! This one’s really dangerous. Even though we haven’t dealt any damage to her, our side’s already losing endurance.”)

Estel started to become impatient and flustered.

It's almost been 30 mins from the start of battle. In that time Nina, who was injured had left the front lines but, there were many among them who had taken lot of damage.

If the battle continued with the same pace, sooner or later they will start to become unable to battle. Some might even die.

“——Kyaaaaa!!”

From below her, a bone chilling scream came suddenly.

As she looked that way, one of the knights and her Pegasus had lost consciousness it seemed and were running unsteadily.

“Damnit! Someone support her!!”

Since the distance from her was too far from her, she quickly gave an order but Lily was faster to aim for the weakened 'prey'.

Even among the countless of them, Lily could clearly discern which of them was the weakened one.

The attack fired by Lily towards the knight who could neither evade nor defend was not a beam but a ball of light.

Although slower than the beam, the ball of light could accurately track and pursue the target. At full strength, the Pegasus could have run away but now that the knight was on her limit of both willpower and stamina, she couldn't do so.

The 5 balls of light that were fired slipped through the knights that came to help her as if making fun of them.

The sound and flash of explosion spread all over. This time, no scream was heard. Just one animal fell from the sky towards the earth.

Lily had once again killed another one. Without even getting conceited due to it, she quickly took the next move.

The reason why Lily was able to attack right now was because it was just after Estel's team had charged too much and given her a gap. After the girls

had attacked, to stop Lily from chanting, a rain of attack magic was casted towards her.

Flan's team and Maty's team that had the job to obstruct Lily once again restarted their long range attack magics. And Lily, who had expected that, took highly irregular evasive maneuvers that could not be imitated by a Pegasus.

("What should I do—if I have to resolve to sacrifice someone, now's the time.")

The most troublesome thing was Lily's overwhelming maneuvering ability. If Pegasus could fly like birds then Lily was like a bee.

If it was a simple battle in a straight line, there wouldn't be much difference but during the time of evasion, that incredible maneuvering made a lot of difference.

If the attack doesn't hit, the damage will also remain 0. Although, evading like that requires high levels of concentration, there was still no sign of Lily looking fatigued yet.

("There's no other choice to stop her by holding her directly. Shit! It would be the same end as the vice-commander then! But there's no other choice either—")

Her thoughts were all over the place, and she couldn't get an answer.

"God damn it! Is there no way to stop her! Darting around like that all the time damnit!!"

Although she shouted that through telepathy, none of the answers that came back were good.

"Are you saying that this late?"

"Nobody would think that we would be exhausted so much against one enemy right!?"

"That's true. It's frustrating but it's true that we'll be the ones at disadvantage if we attack from the front."

"If there's something we can still do, then this is the time to do it! Our magic won't last forever!"

They still couldn't come up with a decisive plan.

".....no other choice. I'll stop that son of bitch fairy's movements myself."

"Son of a bitch? That fairy is a woman no matter how you look at it! Not to mention she's irritatingly beautiful as well!!"

"Do you think I fucking care about something like that!? Don't pour water on my decisive moment!!"

"Are you serious Estel? You won't get away if you touch that barrier of light, you know?"

"There's no other way. Also if we stay blocked here forever, then we won't be able to provide support to the troops on the ground. That way the whole plan would be destroyed."

Yes, in the first place, their mission was not to defeat Lily.

Their main objective was to attack and destroy the enemy defence line and allow the infantry to charge in successfully.

"Look, below the demons have finally come out as well. If we could attack from the air right now, their defences would instantly crumble."

Estel could imagine the acting vice commander hesitate for a bit on the other side of the transmission.

And, after a few seconds, Flan's reply came.

"I'll leave it to you Estel. In return, we'll cast Protect with all our power so come back alive."

"Of course. Who said I'm going to die?"

"Eh, no way, Estel you're really gonna do it?!"

"That's really dangerous!"

"What, you're worrying about me now?"

"No such thing!!"

Those sisters, Cami and Cathy, really never change. Estel thought in her mind.

“Listen, I’ll hold that son of a bitch down so you’ll be the ones to finish her off. Don’t fuck up.”

Although they hesitated, the sisters replied back with agreement.

The Pegasus Knights all resolved themselves, and looked towards Lily who was still calmly floating in the sky.

“Alright! Then here I —”

The moment Estel was about to move, she saw a change in Lily.

Until now, Lily had been firing light beams and ball from inside the barrier but right now, small balls of light were appearing outside the barrier.

“Oi, It’s doing something, be careful!!”

The balls of light slowly started increasing in size and soon became almost double the size of the usual ones.

If they had power as per its looks, they had no idea if they could bear it if they got hit. Especially now that their stamina had almost run out.

(“Why? We didn’t even give it time to chant properly! Anyway, that’s really dangerous!”)

The moment Estel and the others prepared themselves to face Lily’s attack, the balls of light were shot out towards them.

The balls of light fired towards the knights that had scattered in all directions, was definitely slower than any of her previous attacks.

(“They’re slow? Do they have tracking ability? If they are this slow, then it would be better to shoot them down with magic———”)

The moment everyone else thought the same thing and decided to counter attack, the balls of light burst and released an immense light.

“Kuh——”

Their eyes were blinded by the white light and they lost their vision.

For a second they thought they were caught in a huge blast but they felt no problem in their bodies.

“—Shit, it was only a distraction!!”

Recognising the true intent of that move, Estel quickly realized the next move.

“Lux Defence. —المرض ان تشار لم نزع الأب يرض الضوء جدار”
“Laser Heal. —الان تعات تبيع”

A defensive magic to protect her and a heal magic to restore her sight were activated consecutively.

When her vision returned, all that entered her eyes was the shield deployed by her and the clear blue sky.

There was no sign of an incoming attack.

“No, wait, where did that son of a bitch go?”

As she looked around, she could not find Lily or her light barrier.

“Can anyone see her?”

She communicated to her comrades.

The enemy in front of them suddenly disappeared. All of them were expecting a surprise attack from a blind spot.

“No, no signs of the enemy.”

“Can’t see her.”

“I see her! She’s falling towards the ground!!”

“Are you sure Maty?”

“Our team was located beneath it. I clearly saw her pass through as she went downwards!”

“I see. Alert the troops on the ground. We don’t know what it’ll do.”

As a result, Lily had gotten out from the encirclement of the Pegasus Knights and landed on the ground.

Since the enemy had disappeared from their sights, the Pegasus Knights quickly returned to their formation.

“—What’s going on? Nothing’s coming.”

For around 3 minutes, they were alert in the skies but as Estel had said, not a single beam of light came from the forest where Lily should have gone.

“Estel, it could be that some kind of magic of hers might have run out of effective time.”

Flan came beside Estel and said that.

“.....That’s not impossible. It could be that she was using an incredible enhancement magic. It could have been the evil god’s divine protection as well.”

“Yes. Especially, we are unclear regarding the divine protection received by demons in the first place. So we can’t guess their abilities either.”

“So basically, it ran away?”

In such a situation, normally anyone would think that.

“So it ran away but what should we do? Pursue it?”

“No, return to our mission. If it ran away then it’s favourable for us. We’ll attack the enemy’s defensive line just as originally planned.”

If it really had run away due to the effect of some magic running out then it really was the best chance to kill Lily.

Even Estel wanted to kill the monster that could face with the whole Pegasus Knights squad alone but it couldn’t be helped that it ran away inside a deep forest.

The Pegasus Knights could not follow there. That was the job for the soldiers on the ground.

As a result, they concluded that pursuing was impossible and then they need to achieve their original objective.

“We were held back for 30 mins. If we become too late then the soldiers on the ground might get scared and start retreating. Let’s hurry up!”

“”Roger””

After giving the order, the Pegasus Knights began to move out.

And when they moved their sights towards the enemy defence line, an irregularity occurred inside that forest.

The trees and leaves in the forest began to dry up.

What that implied was understood by not just magicians but even those that couldn't use magic as well.

"Is it Life Drain?....."

[Life Drain] was a magic prohibited in the Republic and was labelled as a taboo.

It was a simple magic that could only absorb even the life force along with the magical energy, but its effect was tremendous.

If used carelessly, it could turn this land into a barren wasteland where not even weed would grow for the next 100 years. In the Arc continent, there was an area that had completely lost all living things due to it.

Leaving the effect on surroundings aside, it even had the danger of taking away the life force of allies as well. And not to mention that the user of [Life Drain] would usually start taking pleasure in stealing the life force of others and turn into a madman.

Thus it was a taboo, but this wasn't the Arc continent but the Pandora continent. A land ruled by demons. It was obvious that the rules of the human society wouldn't apply here.

Even if it was a taboo for humans, there was no need for demons to avoid using it.

"All units, be on guard! That thing is still coming after us!!"

As tension appeared among the Pegasus Knights once more, they once again realized that the threat of Lily had not yet left them.

Chapter 109 - The Divine Protection of the Black Gods

Lily who was hidden inside the deep forest sneered at the Pegasus Knights for not choosing to pursue her.

“nfufu, even though you people had the chance to kill me right now.”

Of course, even if the knights had decided to pursue her, she would not have just gotten herself killed easily.

It was only a matter of probability. The Pegasus Knights had no chance of winning while they were in the air, but if they had pursued her now, they might have had at least a chance to win.

“Those guys guessed correctly that the effect of magic had run out, but, their choice on how to deal with it ended up being a mistake.”

The Pegasus Knights had already looked away from where Lily had gone and had concentrated completely on the battle below.

Considering that the enemy’s only airborne fighter had run away, that decision wasn’t exactly wrong either.

But,

“How foolish. Do they think that I won’t return back to the frontlines? Or could it be that they simply don’t even want to consider that possibility?”

According to Lily’s words, it was as if the girls simply wanted to believe that the effect of magic on Lily had ended.

And, Lily’s telepathy proved that it was actually half-correct as well.

To the girl Lily, it was easy to read opponents outer thoughts, who had not specifically casted Mind Protect, even during battle.

Lily clearly understood what the girls were thinking and how they reached their current conclusion.

“They thought that either my magic or the divine protection had run out, but, it seems they never even considered that I have and could actually use both of them.”

The reason why Lily had used the flashy distraction to run away inside the forest was because the 30 min effect of the [Queen Beryl] had run out of time.

Since the [Queen Beryl] was not an artefact built specifically for the fairies only, her affinity with it was only normal.

That's why, there was a limit of 30mins. Any further than that would place immense burden on Lily.

“fufu, let me show you the divine protection of the Fairy Queen—-“

But the [Divine Protection of the Fairy Queen] was different. It was a power for fairies made by the fairies. There was no burden on the body when using it. After all, she was only returning to her usual actual body only.

—الدم ام تصاص روح من الط ب يعية ال حياة قوّة ت تخذ ال طلاب جم يع منح [Life Drain]”

Lily began her chant and at the same time brought out a scroll from her light-type spatial magic and spread it as she threw it in the air.

It was the most effective and high priced scroll in the village made only from the skin of a rank 4 monster. On it, the magic circle drawn by Lily was that of [Life Drain].

The scroll that activated on being infused with magical energy became particles of light and drew a magic circle with Lily as the centre.

And the effect of the magic displayed itself as the life force of every single living thing in the surrounding began to be absorbed forcefully.

“Now then, surrender your pitiful lives to me.”

The absorption of life force, with Lily as the centre, attacked every living thing inside the forest like a giant tornado.

The green plants withered, the insects crawling on the ground stopped moving, birds in the air fell down.

By the time the herbivore animals in the surrounding realized what was occurring and tried to run away, their bodies had already stopped moving and lost their lives.

It was the same for the carnivorous hunting animals as well. The males became vigilant but soon fell down, and the females tried to protect their babies or eggs but lost their strength while embracing them.

Naturally, the children left also had no way to resist it either. The new born lives quickly lost the heat of their bodies. Even the small lives that had not even born and were still inside the eggs were absorbed as well.

It absorbed indiscriminately all and every life in the surroundings. That was the magic known as [Life Drain].

“un, this should help me last 20 mins at least.”

But for Lily, it was nothing more than a necessary step for preparation.

It was a necessary price to be paid, an offering, a sacrifice, to obtain the divine protection.

“O my pure, lovely and beautiful Queen—-“

The origin of magical energy was the world itself. But the origin of the divine protection was the Gods. Then it needed to be drawn not from this world but from the world of Gods.

And it was the soul that was connected to the World where the Gods were enthroned.

All the magical energy within the 100m area around Lily had been offered to the Gods through the [Gate] inside Lily’s soul.

And as Lily’s body was filled with the divine protection, she shouted.

With gratitude and respect in her voice, she shouted the name of the God that granted her the divine protection.

“[Fairy Queen Iris]”

Lily who had once again attained her true form with the help of the Divine protection, flew towards the skies once again leaving behind only a pure white withered forest of death.

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Till now, Kuro no had never seen Divine Protection.

Strictly speaking, all of Kuro no's powers were the [Divine Protection of the Black Gods], and, all of Sariel's powers were the [Divine Protection of the White God].

But these two were unique cases. Kuro no who had received it through experiments and Apostle who receive it suddenly one day out of nowhere, were the exception among exceptions.

Then, just what kind of person would normally receive the Divine Protection. The most universal answer would be a [Strong Person].

On the Pandora continent, various types of Divine protection not related with battles also existed but they would never be noticed. The only thing that could be clearly shown was the strength in battle. In this world of powerful demons where the rule of survival of the fittest existed, it was an obvious fact.

Usually whenever someone unusually strong appears, it means that he must possess some sort of Divine Protection.

Its effect could be allowing the use of a special magic, increase in physical strength, replenishment of magical energy, increase in elemental affinity, change in body shape, etc etc. There were truly too many types of it. And each and every one of them provided an immense amount of power to the person.

Conversely speaking, as long as one wasn't strong enough in the first place, he would never attain a divine protection.

That level would be around rank 3 as per adventurer levels. To be accurate, in the second half of rank 3, a power close enough to a rank 4.

Since Kuro no had only done rank 1 quests after coming to the Pandora continent, it was normal that he had never been together with any strong adventurers that might possess DP.[T/N: I'm shortening Divine Protection to DP cause its irritating to write it all the time.]

But it was different now. The attack squad led by Kuro no were all adventurers of rank 3 and above.

Leaving the rank 4 werewolf aside, there were also adventurers of strong races like Orc, Lizardmen, Golem as well as Humans and Elfs that possessed various martial art skills. They were of various types but all of them were warriors that possessed some sort of divine protection.

And so Kurono was able to see the overwhelming strength of DP users personally in this battle for the first time.

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“Oraaaaaa!!”

Every time Vulcan’s giant sword [Fang sword – Evil Eater] was swung, lots of Crusaders were blown in the air.

All the soldiers that were hit instantly lost one or several of their limbs. Those who didn’t could be counted as very lucky, if you were to disregard the fact that they would still die sooner or later anyway.

“Come at me you fucking humans! I’m finally starting to get in the mood!”

Bearing the blood smeared sword on his shoulder, Vulcan, who smiled fearlessly towards the soldiers was the exact image of the fearsome demons told in the Republic.

But the soldiers will not fall back, they could not do so. After all, to kill, annihilate such creatures was their creed.

“Do not falter. Attack him together!!”

Under the order of the squad commander, the soldiers took formation with their spears and faced Vulcan.

“hehe, looks you guys ain’t scared yet. Nice, I should also become a *little* more serious now as well—”

Without yielding to the bloodlust and fighting spirit released by Vulcan, the soldiers attacked him with their spears.

The spears struck towards him. Even if it was a large sword, a spear would still have longer reach. In front of the wall of spears that provided no escape, Vulcan chanted the name of his God.

“The lone wind clad fang—-[Orphan Wolf – Wolfegand]”

The power of the DP spread throughout his body in an instant as he became even calmer while facing that wall of spears.

“[Air Slash]!!!”

The power of wind dwelt inside the single horizontal slash made by the large sword.

Since Vulcan possessed perfect control over his sword, it didn’t eat the magical energy of the wind created.

The martial art [Air Slash] that was released was a slash that became much longer and reached many meters further and completely mowed down anything in front of it.

The spears that were only a few centimetres away from his body were instantly blown away and the soldiers had their body split apart in two and died while still believing that their attack had connected.

Vulcan who had killed numerous soldiers in a single attack shifted his sights and had already decided his next prey.

The one who lay in the sights of the brutal wolf was the squad commander dressed in equipment better than other soldiers. That equipment was not just for show. He really was stronger than other soldiers and possessed lower level magic as well as martial arts.

Vulcan thought that if 5 of such soldiers of his level had attacked him at once, he might have taken at least one injury.

“O, G-God, grant me protection!—- بِرِسِّ الْوَلْدِ الْيَدِ الْأَسْهَمِ”

Maybe because he saw numerous of his subordinates die from a single blow, his face showed an expression of fear, but he still hadn’t completely lost his fighting spirit.

He didn’t just chant a prayer to his God but also an attack magic was activated.

("You can't kill me with just Ice-Sagita")

Although Vulcan acknowledged that his opponent was brave enough to have not run away instantly, but that wasn't enough to lessen the gap in their strengths.

("Especially now that my DP is activated, I won't even take any injuries.")

The DP of [Orphan Wolf – Wolfegand], its power was wind.

Those who receive its DP have their body clad in wind, on attacking, the blade of wind will also apply force, the wind pressure would act as a defence to lessen the incoming damages and while running, strong winds will carry the body.

This effect that increases attack, defence, evasion, everything in a balance was extremely advantageous during such battles where one faced many opponents together.

Thus defending against or evading this [Ice Sagita] was easy. If he wanted, Vulcan could even just charge straight forward and cut him down instantly.

Vulcan finally decided his course of action and stepped forward with one of his legs that had become even lighter due to the wind, and agilely attacked like a strong gale.

"Ice Sagitgaaaaaaaahhh!!!"

"Huh?"

Vulcan stopped moving. Before his attack even reached, blood spewed from the squad commander's neck and he fell down before he could even attack.

("I didn't even do anything though.....")

Vulcan was in doubt but he soon got his answer when he looked closely.

"Tch, stealing my prey isn't allowed Su-san."

"fufufu, it's first come first served."

Without any hesitation, the rank 4 adventurer Susu replied with a smile.

Clad in a grey robe, she was a woman with no outstanding features. She was so mediocre that while walking through the streets, 9 out of 10 men would not even look back at her.

But holding the big dagger in a reverse grip that had cut through even chain mail, she was a rare existence that could calmly converse while smiling even with Vulcan who was releasing an immense amount of fighting spirit.

No, what was more fearsome was the fact that even Vulcan would not have realized that she was even there if he hadn't concentrated properly.

She hadn't used magic directly to conceal her presence. She was simply a master in concealing her own presence so much that she was like a pebble on the roadside that wouldn't even enter someone's thoughts.

Especially in such a scene of carnage where blood and blades flew around, it was almost impossible to meet her face to face like this.

"You're pretty fired up this time." (Vulcan)

"Well yeah. I need to show my coolness to my partner after all." (susu)

"Hah, looks you've taken an interest in that brat. I didn't think you'd have such a taste."

After he said that, he realized that Susu had already disappeared from his view.

Before he could even think of where she had gone, a voice came from behind him.

"I won't deny that I'm not interested in him but the way you put it is not good. You really lack delicacy."

("Damn I really couldn't see her this time at all. Along with stealth, is her movement speed even above Wolfegand? Is she seriously using her DP, this slime woman?")

He came to the conclusion that any more useless chatter would only bring unnecessary trouble and decided to apologise honestly.

"My bad. It's good if you two get along."

"Of course. Bye then. Let's work hard for a little while longer."

As he looked back, Susu had already disappeared.

Vulcan felt as if he had been talking to a phantom till now.

“To use [Shadow walker – Hanzoma]’s DP, she really isn’t a thief but an assassin.”

Well whatever. Which God’s skill they use is their own choice. There’s no need to speak uselessly about it was how Adventurers worked. Stopping his thoughts there, he turned towards the soldiers that were crossing the river and coming here.

“For now, I just need to have as much fun as I can!!”

Swearing that he won’t let his prey be stolen this time, Vulcan raised his large sword and joyfully rushed towards the enemy group.

Vulcan’s grey fur that were clad in the winds as he ran around like a storm killing his enemies was truly the true image of a person who had received the DP of the [Orphan Wolf – Wolfegand].

Chapter 110 - Fairy Vs. Pegasus Knights (3)

Lily who had regained her strength with the help of the DP of [Fairy Queen – Iris] once again entered into battle in mid air against the Pegasus Knights who were getting more and more fatigued.

“—[Ignis Charge]!”

Camy released a charging attack. But the lance of flames was still unable to pierce through Lily’s Oracle Shield.

“—[Ice Charge]!”

After her, Cathy attacked Lily with an ice type martial art skill.

The strength of the skill was average, but on using fire and ice type skills on the same target consecutively, it could even smash through an iron door due to thermal expansion.

But, Lily’s Oracle shield kept on shining the same as usual as if ignoring the laws of physics.

“Aghn, I’ve had enough!”

“Nothing’s working at aalll!!”

The complaint made by two came to Estel’s ears through the transmission.

“Tch, so it’s the same as before.”

This should be a battle where the enemy can’t retreat either. So she thought that maybe Lily was acting strong and her power might have fallen but it seems she was wrong.

Even though they had used up quite a lot of energy and stamina, the enemy was still full of magical energy.

“No, hasn’t she gotten even stronger than before.”

She remembered that previously, such charging attacks had at least created some slight cracks on the shield.

She had no way of knowing whether this was because they had gotten tired, or the enemy had gotten stronger, or was it due to both.

“No other choice. Remember what I had said some time ago?”

Estel would stop her Lily’s movements by directly going close and Cathy and Camy would use that chance to deal the finishing blow.

It was extremely dangerous but she could not think of any other way, and neither did they have the time to think up a plan leisurely either.

“—ufufu, it’s useless.”

Estel clearly heard that voice inside her head.

The source was the same transmission method, but this wasn’t the voice of a comrade. This voice was,

“Yo, You bitch!!”

“Such a shabby telepathy technique. I was easily able to cut into it.”

It was certainly the voice of Lily who was in front of them.

From Estel’s pov, she could still see Lily dodging the attacks of Flan’s squad and Maty’s squad even now.

But, the voice that came over from the transmission was elegant and relaxed, as if she was talking over a cup of tea.

“This fucking son of a bitch!! Underestimating us!! I’ll kill you with my lance right now!!”

“Weren’t those stupid sisters supposed to deal the finishing blow to me? To forget the plan you made yourself, is your mind turning hazy already? Oh my, humans really do grow old too quickly.”

Estel realized,

(“This is bad, she had been completely monitoring our transmissions!!?”)

Even if it was a simple plan, if the enemy knew about it, it’ll make a huge difference.

“Sh, shit…….”

Estel broke into cold sweat.

Whether Lily knew that or not, she kept on talking in the same way.

“fufu, you have a bad mouth but to sacrifice yourself for your comrades, you have a pretty cute side as well.”

“Stop messing around! Don’t speak like you know everything!!”

No magical energy was flowing inside the transmission device. Her voice shouldn’t have been transmitted nor received, but, the voice from the speaker still didn’t stop.

“But don’t you have some lingering regrets remaining before sacrificing yourself? I know it, I know it very well. You even have someone you love hidden deep inside your heart.”

“St, stop.”

She realized that her own voice had started shivering.

(“Calm down. It must be a bluff. Seeing that I’m a woman, she’s just saying things randomly!”)

“Um, the name of your loved one is——“

“Stoopp!!”

The name Lily took was the same as the person that appeared inside Estel’s mind.

(“Wh, wh, why? Why does she know?.....”)

Without minding the dumbfounded Estel, Lily continued speaking.

“My oh my! He really is a cute guy with brown hair and big round eyes. He’s like a cute little pup, makes you want to tease him.”(lily)

(“I see, she can look inside a person’s head and thoughts even at such a distance and so accurately.....What the hell? She didn’t intercept our transmissions, she has been reading our thoughts from the very start!”)

As Lily accurately described Estel’s loved one, Estel finally realized the precision of Lily’s telepathic abilities.

At the same time, having her thoughts and heart completely broken into left Estel extremely discomforted.

“That’s not good. You haven’t even confessed to him and you want to die here?”

“Shut up!! Be silent!!!”

“He’s a medic, so he should be nearby right? You can quickly go and confess to him right now.”

“Shut up!!”

“C’mon if you don’t do so quickly, he might die first, you know?”

“Shut the fuck up!!!”

“It took you so much time to finally get along with him, so you can’t die until you make him yours.”

“I said shut up already!!!”

Estel shouted as Lily sneered and ridiculed her.

“ahahahaha, you really are cute, to get so shaken just by talking about the man you like——”

This woman on the other side of the transmission was clearly speaking words meant to shake her. And Estel was aware that she really was completely shaken and disturbed right now.

Estel steadied herself and made herself ready to face the next scary words that woman might speak to her.

“Evade it, Estel!!!”

She couldn’t recognise whose voice it was in that instant. All she knew was that a white beam was approaching her from the front.

And the source of this white beam was the finger of the being that flew inverted in mid air inside the oracle shield.

Just how long had she been targeted. To have not sensed an attack filled with so much killing intent, this would have never happened if it was the usual Estel.

It was really simple. She had been simply shaken and mislead by Lily’s words and was caught off guard.

("Damn, I must avoid—")

Pegasus's white wings fluttered in mid air.

"Gaaaaaaahhhh!!!"

Estel screamed due to the pain and heat. An unbelievable level of pain ran through her whole body.

Her mind had been ravaged by intense pain, but she still barely had enough capacity to think calmly.

("—I am still alive. I feel like I died but I'm not dead yet!!")

The moment she realized that she hadn't died, she also realized that her Pegasus had started falling.

The white wings that had been burned and destroyed largely came in her view. It was not just her, but even her Pegasus had taken damage. That too at the wings.

But it wasn't a fatal blow.

"Show some spirit dammit!! A pegasus can't fall like this, c'mon!!!"

Spreading its wings once more, the Pegasus somehow maintained its balance in mid air once again.

Before she realized, she was inside the triangle formation made by Flan and her two subordinates.

It took some time before she realized that they were here to protect Estel from Lily's attacks.

""الان تعال تعال تعال—Laser Heal.""

Two healing magics flew towards her. But the pain only became a slight lesser. It wasn't enough to heal her wounds.

".....My bad, I was caught off guard."

Just saying that, Estel drank the potion prepared by her in advance.

It was a high grade article, but not even half of her wounds had healed.

She brought out one more and sprinkled it over the damaged wings of the Pegasus.

This one also had the same effective strength as the one used by Estel but the wounds weren't shallow enough to be healed by just this.

"Estel, let's retreat."

Estel was unable to answer to Flan's proposal instantly. She once again looked towards her wounds.

("Shit! I shouldn't have looked.")

Her left hand had the deepest wounds. She might have reflexively used her hand to protect her body from Lily's attacks.

The plate armour with defensive magic had been completely burned away and the attack had deeply wounded her.

The wound started from her left hand and reached towards her shoulder, stopping just barely before it reached her neck.

If it had reached a few centimetres more, her head would have been separated from her body, no doubt.

It seems, Lily's beam attack had mowed down the Pegasus's left wing along with Estel from the left side.

("It's not that I can't fight, but, I won't be able to stop that bitch's movement properly, but still.....")

"Don't joke. I can still fight."(estel)

"That's not it. Look Estel, the ground forces have started retreating."

"What!?!"

As she looked downwards, she saw the soldiers moving in the exact opposite direction as before.

But, considering the mistakes made by them, she wasn't in a position to abuse the soldiers either.

".....Let's retreat."

“Roger.”

After hearing the response, Estel looked towards Lily who was still not moving and floated in mid-air.

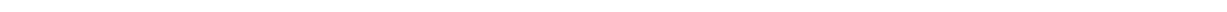
It wasn't a distance where she could have seen the expression on Lily's face, but she knew that Lily was laughing right now.

“Bye. After you return, have your beloved one to heal your body and heart Estel.”

Lily, who spoke that through the transmission, flew back towards Alsace without pursuing the Pegasus Knights.

“Goddamnit, making fun of me till the very end.....”

As Estel cursed her, only Lily's smiling face appeared inside her head. She wondered whether that was also due to Lily.



Chapter 111 - Flame Rampart

The 24 man assault party was fighting by the riverbank by using martial arts, magic, and DP and had yet to suffer a single casualty.

But the number of enemies crossing over the river was in hundreds. Even if they had been fighting with the vigour of a mighty warrior able to match countless, it was still impossible to stop all of the enemy soldiers to not let them pass through.

Passing through the rain of arrows and magic, also making through the blades of the assault party, the infantry soldiers had finally reached Alsace village's protective wall.

But still, the soldiers had been yet unable to cross through this thin, weak looking fence of wood.

“Wh, what's with these iron wires—”

The soldiers stepped onto the barbed wires without any hesitation.

And the next moment they regretted it. This thorn filled wires of iron pierced through and coiled around their legs giving great pain, and also slowed down their advance.

“Uraa! Go back to your homes you damned humans!!”

The adventurers on the other side of the fence who stood there to intercept the unmoving soldiers, shouted and cursed at them as well.

This squad was made with adventurers of an average of rank 2 and were weaker comparatively, but since they had been working as an adventurer for the past many years, they were still skilled warriors from the pov of the soldiers.

The spears that stabbed from the inner side of the fence expertly killed the soldiers one by one that had been trapped in the barbed wires.

But on the other hand, the Crusaders still advanced with their big numbers and soon a lot of soldiers had joined the fight in front of the protective wall.

“Nee-san, isn't this starting to get more and more dangerous!?”

The members of the [Three hunting Princess] that were fighting on the frontlines like brave Valkyries. Out of them, the third sister Hanna, raised her voice.

“Calm down. We’re still fine. An Elf would not panic in any condition. Laura, are the preparations done?”

“Yes, nee-san.”

Hanna had already switched to a spear and had been killing the soldiers that had been trying to cross over from the past 5 mins.

On the other hand, the eldest Irina, and the second sister Laura had nocked an even bigger lightning arrow with their Sylphlight.

The enemy had been advancing in front of them and it was a situation where they could hit even if they fired with their eyes closed. But, the enemy was not in their sight right now.

“Everyone, get away from the fence!”

On Irina’s voice, Hanna and the rest of the adventurers took one step back from the fence.

Seeing that chance, all the soldiers clung to the fence and tried to climb over.

“”[Thunder Emission – Line Blast]!!””

A lower grade wide range lightning magic was fired from the bow. It was impossible to attack every enemy with just two of such attacks.

But, iron wires had been spread around their legs. The fence was also wrapped with iron wires as well.

The lightning fired from the Wind Lightning Bow – Sylphlight was first absorbed by the barbed wires coiled around the fence and quickly the lightning circulated to all the barbed wires spread around.

At this moment, the barbed wire, turned into electrically charged barbed wires.

The soldiers clinging to the fence suddenly stopped moving like insects that had pesticide thrown on them, and the soldiers that had their legs trapped in the barbed wire were electrocuted and lost the strength to fight.

“See, we’re still fine.”(irina)

“Eh, right.....”(hanna)

Irina’s face showed calmness. Hanna understood the difference in the level of tension between her and her elder sister.

“Everyone get ready! More of them are coming!”

The soldiers directly in front of the protective wall had been wiped out but once again more of the enemies appeared.

They didn’t have the time to get happy just by killing one wave of enemies. The adventurers psyched themselves once more and faced the enemy.

“Nee-san, the next one might not work this well.”

Laura’s cool voice came to Irina.

“Why so? The fence is still in perfect shape.”

“That’s not it. There are too many corpses.”

Laura pointed towards the other side of the fence. There a lot of corpses and wounded soldiers were lying on the ground.

It was obvious, but they were lying not on the ground but on the barbed wires.

“Oh no, they’d use the corpses as a foothold—“

As Irina realized it, it also became a reality.

The incoming Crusaders used the corpses and even those who were still breathing comrades as a footing without hesitation and moved towards the protective wall without getting caught in the barbed wires.

“You bastards! You would go as far as to even step on your own comrades!”

One of the adventurers shouted.

For adventurers who stressed on teamwork, the actions of the Crusaders who, let alone the corpses of their comrades, without helping even those who were alive and stepped on them were unforgivable.

But for the soldiers, it was a natural action to take. Even on earth, using the bodies of their comrades to cross barbed wire was a tactic that was much used.

Though only Kurono knew about that fact among the adventurers, for the Crusaders it was simply using a convenient footing that they found.

“Certainly, this might get troublesome. Like this, even if we used the lightning attack again, it won’t work much.”(Irina)

From here on out, they had no choice but to stop the enemy with pure strength.

Resolving for that, Irina and Laura drew their weapons and faced their enemies with even more vigour, at that moment,

“I’m back!!”

With such a yell, the crusaders heard the unforgettable explosive sound of the Devil.

With a *Giyarigiyari* sound, with black muzzle flashes, black bullets that pierced through even armour flew here.

“I have made you wait everyone! The machine gun is back again!!”

Once again, the surekill storm of bullets attacked the Crusaders.

Mozrun held the machinegun’s grip and fired towards the Crusaders attacking the protective wall.

“fuu, it sure came back at a great time.”

Irina showed a somewhat relaxed expression and looked back to give orders.

“Then, let’s go and meet Kurono-san and the others.”(Fiona)

The one who stood there was the witch dressed in black clothes different from Kurono, Fiona.

“Then, I’ll be counting on you.”(irina)

“Yes, leave it to me.”

Fiona brought out a large horn from inside her trademark witch’s hat.

Putting her small lips on the horn, she blew air into it.

BUOOOOOONN

A sound loud enough to drown the shouts of the soldiers and the shooting of the machinegun resounded.

It was certainly loud enough to even reach the ears of Kurono and the rest of the assault party beyond the protective wall.

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(POV to kurono)

“It’s the signal of the horn! Everyone fall back!!”

As the sound of the horn came to my ears, I gave the order to retreat.

Though I say so, everyone should have heard it so they really should not need my orders anyway.

“Uraaa! Come at meee!!”

Among the blood smeared soldiers, it seems there was one who had even forgotten the signal and kept on fighting.

I’m talking about you, Vulcan.

“Magic Bullet Arts.”

I sent a bullet to his temporal region. It is one of those soft ones that I used in the duel.

“Ouch! What Kurono?! Don’t interfere damnit!”

2 soldiers who got caught in his swing were blown away as he turned back with angry words.

“Retreat. Did you not hear the horn?”

“Aa, yeah, such a signal was there as well.”

You, if I had not said anything, how long were you going to fight? Till you died?

“Black Smoke.”

For the time being I released a smoke screen as I took the muscle headed, fighting crazed werewolf with me back to the village to retreat.

With the appearance of the black smoke all over the place, the soldiers seemed on guard thinking it might be poison. But unfortunately this smoke had no attacking abilities. It’s just a smokescreen.

It’s a magic of which I have memories of having used first against Sariel to run away from her. But since there is no attack that might hit me accurately even with this smoke, it is a much more comfortable situation than that time.

“As expected of a skilled adventurer, even the skill to retreat is flashy.”

All those who had been encircled by the soldiers and were currently in melee used this chance to slip through the gaps and started retreating.

But still, there is no other way to stop the enemy here on these open plains. As expected, the soldiers chased after us who were falling back.

“The demons are retreating!”

“After them!”

Since we started to retreat, the Crusaders became livelier.

If we kept on moving backwards like this directly towards the gate, they’ll also enter through the gate when we enter.

Somewhere, we needed to hold them off to gain enough time for us to get back inside.

But, that was not my job.

“Move it oraa!!”

Vulcan began to take down the enemies that had slipped through us and had reached the protective wall.

The soldiers who had ended up as a victim of a pincer attack were easily driven out under the blades of the assault party. Yeah, first of all we need to get rid of the enemies near the gate.

The 24 people of the assault party gathered in front of the barbed wires that had been laid down just after we had departed from here.

All that's left is to wait for them to meet us.

“Welcome back Kurono-san.”

Fiona's words came to ears at the same time as the gate opened.

“Yeah, I'm back.”

Fiona stood at the gate with her usual sleepy expression. From her both sides, two adventurers holding scissors or rather nipper like items with a long handle appeared.

The item they held was not a weapon. It was an item required to remove the barbed wire.

Thanks to practicing countless times, with quick movements, the barbed wire in front of the gate was cleared out and created a path.

But in that time, I also saw countless soldiers who wanted to use this chance to enter in through the gate we opened as well.

“Then, I'm counting on you.”(kurono)

“Yes—”(Fiona)

Without even minding the soldiers approaching from behind, we calmly entered through the gate while listen to Fiona's chant.

“ك يكو ن لا ثاء ه يرو شي لهب ال ثاب ت لم نع حاجز جدار اي قاف ال نار لهب”

I, who was not a normal magician, did not know what that chant meant, but, I knew what magic was about to be activated.

It was the same line of magic that saved me back at Irz.

I had seen a magic that looked like an advanced grade giant wall of flame but the magic she was about to use now to stop the enemy was, this time, truly the advanced level defensive magic.

“—[Ignis Rampart Defence]”

It was truly an eruption.

A shield of fire. A wall of flame. Such an expression would not fit it. A large mountain of red burning flames possessing extreme temperature had risen up here.

Just as how magma of a volcano could not be stopped no matter how many humans jump in, this [Ignis Rampart Defence] had clearly stopped the countless troops.

“.....amazing.”(kurono)

“Thank you very much.”(Fiona)

I wasn't the only one thinking that. The adventurers as well as the Crusaders who were trying to attack had been captivated by it.

And, without losing a single person from the 24 man assault party, everyone had safely entered back in the village and the gates had been closed once more.

And at the same time the flame rampart swayed like a mirage, and the next moment, it disappeared completely as if it was just an illusion.

Chapter 112 - A Temporary Retreat

After returning back through the gate, I along with Mossan, once again attacked the enemy with our crossfire.

Quite a lot of them had come close to the gate but after the crossfiring restarted, we were able to push them back away once again.

I once again realized the astounding killing ability of the crossfire once again but, if the machinegun stopped again, we'll have to leave through the gate once more.

This time we had returned without losing a single person but the on the second time, casualties will definitely arise.

On top of that, even I can't continue to fire bullet arts infinitely either.

Although we still had margin, if we kept on continuing like this and the enemy continues to advance in the same pace, it's doubtful whether we'll be able to hold them off for even today.

But that thought ended up as a needless anxiety.

".....the enemy is falling back."

After we started the crossfire for the second time, we pushed back the enemy soldiers that had come close to the protective wall, and then soon after that, the enemies started to retreat one by one.

"Oi Kurono, they're escaping but is it fine to not pursue them?"

Vulcan had thrown away his bow and was ready to jump out of the gate.

Well it is basic to go after the escaping enemy but.....

"We won't pursue."

"Alright, leave it to—wait what!?"

Calm down Vulcan and remove your hand from the handle of your sword.

"The enemy doesn't have a machinegun but they have enough magicians to compensate for that on the other side of the shore. If we attacked, they'll

use that chance to use wide range attacks to kill us even if that meant that they'll drag their own allies into it as well."

"You can't call yourself an Adventurer if you get scared of everything!"

"If their attack party tried to assault us continuously, we would not hold for even half the day. Even if that didn't happen, if we decide to pursue them right now, there will definitely be casualties. We barely have enough people here right now already. We can't lose more of our men anymore."

"Tch, can't help it then. If the leader says it I guess I'll have to listen to it. Oi, you bastards, return to your positions, don't think of throwing away your bows already! I'm bearing with it as well!!"

Other adventurers who wanted to pursue like Vulcan scattered away with unpleased expressions.

"But, Kurono?"

"Hm?"

"Will the enemy come again?"

The Crusaders retreated back to the other shore, and the Pegasus Knights in the air have also seem to be disappeared.

The battle has completely stopped right now but this isn't a simple battle where this could be considered as a victory.

This is a defensive battle. We need to keep on protecting as long as the enemy keeps charging.

The enemy has only retreated for a short while.

"I don't know when they'll come again but I'm sure that they have definitely not given up."

"I see, well our objective is to buy time. It is good for us if they decide to stay idle, right?"

"Yeah, but don't let your guard down, they might attack again soon as well. There's also a chance that they might plan a surprise attack or a night attack as well. Be prepared at all times."

Just what kinds of plan will the Crusaders come up with; I have no way of knowing.

So that we aren't taken by surprise, we'll have to keep watch 24/7.

We'll have to continue this situation where we won't know when the enemy will come attacking, for a whole week. Fatigue will definitely start piling up even if we don't enter into a direct battle.

"From here on out, it's a war of attrition——"

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Just as the sun had begun to set, Norz who had been hit by the Ballista's attack finally woke up.

Seeing his surroundings, he quickly realized where he was.

This was the Crusader's encampment in the Vato village and currently he was inside one of the hurriedly constructed field hospitals.

Since most of the buildings had been destroyed by the scorched earth tactics used by the demons, they had used a comparatively large house in its place.

Norz was the only one on a bed, since he was the commander of the troops. The rest of the injured soldiers had been laid down on the floor directly with just a sheet.

"Urnu....."

As he raised his still paining body, one of the medics who realized it quickly came here.

While the medic and Norz exchanged info with each other, Sister Sylvia who had received the report also came here.

"How is your condition?"

"No problem, I can fight again soon enough."

If the demons tried a surprise attack right now, he had healed enough to have picked his mace and gone back to the battlefield again.

Conversely speaking, if it wasn't an emergency situation, he wouldn't try and move his body right now though.

"It'll be troublesome if you died so easily. Please try to act a bit more prudently from now onwards."

"Guh.....Rather than that, what happened to the battle? We have occupied Alsace already, right?"

Hearing that, Sylvia gave a sigh and told him otherwise.

"No, the attack has been stopped and the troops have retreated from Alsace for the time being."

"Wh, What did you say!? What is that supposed to mean!?"

Norz raised his voice due to the unexpected reply but Sylvia was still calm since she had expected that reaction.

"The enemy defence line was much more solid than we had thought. If they had continued like that, there would have been only an increase in our damages and so the decision to retreat was made."

"Fuck that! Just how strong can that meagre protective wall be!? Do you know how many soldiers we—"

"Let us talk about the details after we leave this place. You'll have to listen to the reports made by the commanders of every squad as well."

After saying just that, Sylvia left the room.

"Impossible. Even though so many soldiers and even the Pegasus Knights had been mobilised, and we couldn't topple a single small village?....."

Norz without even realizing that Sylvia had already left, held his head in his arms as he tried to accept this incredible fact.

It was a battle in which he had absolute confidence but first, the complete heavy armoured knight squad was killed by the enemy, he himself had fallen to an enemy ballista attack, and to top it off, they had been unable to capture Alsace in the end.

This was completely unexpected. To have retreated from a small demon force while leading a large army, it was a massive failure both as a commander as well as a believer of the cross.

It was so bad that it might have been better to have been killed in action.

But Norz quickly rid himself of that thought. The ones he needed to curse were those despicable demons who used evil underhanded tactics.

He will definitely consign each and every demon in Alsace to oblivion.

Even if he has to face some kind of punishment after this battle, he will definitely deal with those demons before that happened.

Especially that black dressed magician called as the 'Devil' by the army, he would make sure to crucify that bastard till his body rotted to the core otherwise Norz wouldn't feel satisfied.

"Damned demons.....although I had no intention to let any of you live in the first place, but don't think you will die peacefully now....."

Chapter 113 – The Night on the 2nd of Hatsuhi Month (1)

Looks like the Crusader's have completely retreated, the white large army that attacked, is nowhere to be seen right now.

Only some small groups might be hiding on the opposite shore to observe us.

The main force should have returned back to Vato Village.

"We somehow made it today."

I murmured and closed my eyes.

In truth I didn't want to sleep in the guild room, but Mossan persuaded me saying 'Relaxation is also an important part of work'.

To stop the advance of enemy soldiers the main fire powers like me who can use bullet arts and the machine gun shouldn't be away from the gates. In near future, either me or Mossan will have to stand near the gates as guards.

This guarding system is difficult for an ordinary human to pull off, but my body is a lot more tough than that of an ordinary human and Mossan is also near an demonic beast. We both can move without any rest for at least 1 week.

But like normal humans, many other races also can't do work without any rest. If they don't take any rest then it will only accumulate fatigue and will result in the decline of war potential.

Though I say that, the ones present here are adventurers. It won't be a problem if everyone takes rest by turns. They are happy that they will be able to rest on the bed inside guild rather than sleeping outdoors which is the inevitable process during quests.

Of course, there are not sufficient number of beds and more than half are sleeping on the floor.

“But, when the casualties increase, it won't remain the same.....”

The total number of casualties today were only 2. They died by having spear struck into them when the enemy approached the defensive walls.

Seeing from the results, that just a group of 100 people stopped a large army with a really low loss percentage, from the standpoint of plan progressing it is unbelievably good.

Even if it's like this, it is not easy to break the defenses.

When an adventurer dies it is their own responsibility, but if they died under my commands, the level of responsibility is different.

Just by making a single mistake, others can die easily, that is something which is unbelievably fearful. I once again realized it after hearing the casualty report.

“—I will worry about it later, I have already made up my mind. I and everyone too will make sacrifices to buy time for completing the evacuation.”

Right now there is no time to worry about other things or thinking or even getting shocked by them.

The thing I need to think right now is only about are the tactics for the plan. How will the enemy move, attack and how will we take advantage over their actions.

There are a lot of things to think about. Furthermore, the data I've earned today is valuable. After all, this is the first head on collision battle against the Crusaders. I now know the number of people on the their side and how they fight.

"Just from the results it is superb, it's on the level of overwhelming victory. We have 2 casualties but it won't be strange for their side to have casualties exceeding 1000."

There is healing magic present, so many injured will be revived in full power and be ready to face off tomorrow. But the people who have died are also in great numbers.

There is no doubt that we were able to reduce the military force of Crusaders exponentially.

However, I know that it's not enough for the collapse of the army. Even including the casualties and injured ones it won't even reach to one-third of their whole force.

But still, there is no doubt that nothing went wrong from the trap of breaking the bridge to controlling the flow of battle, No, rather it went just too smoothly.

The battle is not over with this, looking at the long term we will have to retreat in near future and the enemy will not let us do that.

If the commander of the enemy has a lot of pride, then right now his face might be red from anger. After all, he couldn't siege a small village after mobilizing a large number of soldiers.

If we assume that, then it won't be strange for him to attack without taking the casualties into consideration.

It's simple but with 100% success rate. If he takes a step forward than my tactics then Alsace will fall into the hands of enemy.

"The time limit of continuing cross fire is really bad, but nothing can be done now. How will I be able to stop them during the cooling time.....In the end, it comes to crushing them with power, huh"

The solution is only all of us giving our all to stop them. I can't think of any plan in this short amount of time to overturn tables on them.

No, in the first place, the god gave us luck that we were able to continue the cross fire without any difficulties.

The Crusaders are already pretty tough. If they had charged without caring about the bullets fired from the machine gun, then our plan would've already been overturned.

Even if the protective walls are wrapped with barbed wires, but it will eventually break against them. It was only due to the fact that I have cross-fire system, that I can say it is possible to defend Alsace Village for 1 week.

And today, the power of machine gun was demonstrated and to cover it up we showed our power and guts. It is a pretty good war progression.

"And for Lily to have actually stopped the whole Pegasus Knights alone.....this was the most lucky things that happened for us"

I did know that Lily was strong, but I never thought she would be able to stop the whole Pegasus Knight Squad by herself.

And the work of dealing with the Pegasus Knights who escaped from Lily was of Simon and the archers stationed in the Guild.

As a matter of fact, I predicted that there will be a lot of casualties on our side during that time.

Fighting head on against a group of elite soldiers wearing first-class equipment and are attacking from mid-air. It won't end up with just some scratches for us.

But looking at the reports, the casualties in the guild were 0. The Pegasus Knights in the first place didn't come near them, after all Lily stopped them all by herself.

And during the time Lily was fighting, the ground forces started to retreat and so the Pegasus Knights retreated as well.

Though it happened in reality, it's difficult to really digest this fact. I never thought Lily in her true form would be this strong. In the first place today was the first time I saw her fighting in her true form.

How should I say it, but perhaps her true form is Dragon rather than a Fairy. No, really wouldn't it be better for Lily to be the leader in terms of power.....

"But even Lily has her limits. Next time the Pegasus Knights attack, they will come near the Guild."

After the enemy retreated, Lily came to me and spoke words of apology.

“Sorry, Kurono. I alone wasn’t able to annihilate the whole Pegasus Knight Squad. I can only defeat some of them with this body before it reaches the time limit. I increased the time to fight using the divine protection, but it isn’t something that will always work. Next time, I doubt I will be able to stop them all.”

Saying that, Lily changed to her little girl form, and maybe because she overworked herself, she suddenly went to sleep.

I immediately took her to Guild and laid her on the bed. Most probably, she is right now recovering her stamina.

“*Sigh* Don’t overwork yourself, Lily”

Though I am pretending to be calm. In truth my heart was aching like hell when I had to make Lily fight alone against the Pegasus Knights.

Or rather, was Lily thinking of really annihilating them. I believe I said just to stop their advance.....

“No good, it’s not good to care much only about those close to me right now.....but in the end, I’m still worried.”

For the time being, even if Pegasus Knights appear, with Lily here we can stop them completely for 30 minutes at most.

Today she defeated 7 people, and others too gained major or minor injuries. Next time will be on the same level.

Anyway, we will be able to reduce the war potential of Pegasus Knights thanks to Lily. We will have to make sacrifices, but it’s not impossible to annihilate them too.

“If we can stop the Pegasus Knights. The problem left is the ground forces.”

There is no other choice than to somehow pull it off, without any hope of getting reinforcements or without any plan to turn tables on them.

In truth, it was possible to kill of many soldiers thanks to the sniping from the guild gate and cover firing from inside the guild.

There numbers are great, so having arrows equipped with lightning being thrown at them is a good plan.

Even if the arrows don't hit, they will get the electric shock due to water.

“Simon also worked hard today”

Simons, reduced the numbers of magicians being deployed on the opposite shore.

She took only some advice from me and created a sniper rifle. She really is a girl to be feared with her unmatched accuracy in sniping.

The pair of Simon and Suu-san gave better results than what I had expected.

During the time of preparations, seeing them practicing sniping gave a feeling of a really good pair. There was no wrong choice in choosing Suu-san as a spotter.

Now that I think about it, during the time I was fighting the heads of enemies around me were having their heads blown. It must be due to those two.

I can still understand about Simon, but Suu-san's fighting style to cut enemies head while hiding her presence is more fearful. According to

Vulcan it is the power of her divine protection.....Rank 4 adventurers really are great.

“The adventurers are more powerful than I thought. We were able to protect the village today because everyone fought to their full extent.”

I have no words to thank them, but thinking that their blood will be flown on the battlefield from now on, I can't help but feel dark anxiety inside my heart.

The ones to die next might be me, or the ones close to me.

The fact of losing everyone in Irz Village feels like a distant past already, but the anger, sadness and indescribable sense of loss I felt at that time, is still living in my heart.

I don't want to feel like that anymore. No, maybe I just want to run away from everything by forgetting everyone and everything about this place.

“.....Not good, Don't think like that me. I now have the responsibility of others lives in my hands.”

That's right, now there is no place to run, the battle has already begun.

Chapter 114 – The night on the Second of Hatsuhi Month (2)

The ones in charge of night guard are the beast men who can see in the night or the thieves with skills or magic to see in the darkness.

Simon is the one specialised in long-distance attacks, but that is useless without any night-vision goggles.

He has the greatest concentration power but he lacks in the physical areas such as stamina and endurance. So he is taking a rest right now.

Simon can sleep for one whole night as the enemy is not going to attack in night, but after coming down from the rooftop he heads towards the room Kurono was sleeping in rather than his allotted room.

“Is Onii-san already asleep”

The resting time are the same for Simon and Kurono, but Kurono decided to again go towards the protective wall after taking a nap.

When Simons moves his line of sight towards the passage in front of Kurono’s bedroom.

“Ah, Lily-san.....”

Lily is small, but one can identify her thanks to her two pair of wings.

In the first place, the ones with the appearance of a child within the adventurer alliance are only Simon and Lily.

“Nh, What are you doing here?”

(Crap, her mind right now is that of her original self.....It would have been better if she had the child’s mind but this one is really scary.....)

It is already a common knowledge between the adventurer alliance about Lily’s dual personalities. Simon is also not an exception.

But rather he learnt it fast that Lily has dual personalities.

The face of Lily has already become a trauma for the lad named Simon. And that has been so since the day he met Kurono and Lily broke into his laboratory with an angry face.

“E-Erm nothing much.....”

Simon speaks evasive words while avoiding looking in her eyes. However, Lily already has a rough estimation for his actions without even using Telepathy.

But, there is obligation for her to show that she understands his actions.

"I see, Kurono is already sleeping so come later. Kurono is tired due to overworking, if you're going to disturb his sleep, I won't allow it."

"Eh, then Lily-san is—"

"I'm not disturbing his sleep. I just came to sleep together with him."

"I-Is that so"

(I heard that Lili-san was sleeping in another room after coming back. So it means that she came to Onii-san's room with some motive, right?)

Simon thinks that for what reason would Lily need to sleep together with Kurono.

"If you understand it, then return back to your room."

"Uu. Yeah"

Simon thinks 'There are always people who never give up' while looking at Lily's round and cute eyes full of will power.

"*Sigh*"

Simon after seeing off Lily, who went inside Kurono's room, returned back.

"I had so much to talk."

"—In other words, did you want to get praised by Kurono?"

"Aaah!? Susu-san how did you—"

Simon leaked out a loud voice due to a sudden intervention while he was talking to himself. Susu-san quickly covers his mouth before alarming others.

"If you don't be quiet, Kurono won't get angry, but Lily-san definitely will."

Simon agrees to her words by nodding his head.

"It was unfortunate that she beat you in getting Kurono. Try to get praised a lot by Kurono tomorrow."

"Eh. I don't want that—I used the rifle and machine gun for the first time in a battle, so I wanted to ask how it was and....."

"I'll leave it at that"

"I'm saying the truth!!"

Simon objects with blushing cheeks. Seeing those actions anyone can know whether the words Susu said were wrong or right.

What Simon is saying is also right but it's just an extra to cover his real intentions. He wants to hear 'You did really good' from Kurono. [ET: I'm writing it later, but many were speaking shit about Gender this and that now have fun with 'He' and 'his' relation with Kurono.]

"But still, when I saw you heading towards Kurono's room. I thought you were going to sneak in with some ulterior motives."

"Sneaking in, Eeeeh!? I-I won't do that that ever, furthermore we both are men! Or rather do you see me as a person with that sort of hobby!"

At least, Kurono is still thinking about Simon as a girl, but for good or for bad, Simon has yet to realize it.

"But still, you're already of the age to have a lover. And seeing you staring at Kurono with considerably lovely eyes, so I thought that maybe...you know"

"I'm a straight!"

He objects with all his energy. Surely he thinks highly of Kurono, but he doesn't love Kurono like that at all.

"Hmm, who knows. We have the three hunting princesses and the magician Fiona and many girls with good face, but you don't seem like you have any interest in them."

"If I look at them with those eyes, won't I be just a pervert."

Simon accepts the fact that the girls Susu recommended are beautiful, but he doesn't have any crooked aesthetic feelings.

"Then maybe Lily-san. That person does look beautiful and all, but I won't recommend her."

"Lily-san. Please, no way in hell!"

No matter how much beautiful she is, it's natural for anyone to not like her if they are glared at everytime they meet her.

"Hmm, then—Whoa, I got it"

"Please stop this topic right now, I'm no good with talk about love and all—"

"So you don't like the ones with small chests."

"Please listen to me....."

Simon drops her shoulders while sighing.

He looks down at his feet while thinking of a way to escape from this strange talk. Then looks up with an idea in his mind.

“How about this?”

Two mountains start swinging in front of Simon.

“E, Eeehhh!? How did you, how did your chests get larger!?”

“Oh, is it good to take that reaction as proof that I also have some hope?”

“I was just scared!”

Susu shows a somewhat nasty smile. Just some seconds before her chest was like the great plains, but now, as if they had gotten the blessings of Mother Earth, there are two large mountains present.

It's size is about the size of Simon's head. That mass which has already surpassed the level of large is bursting out of the thin shirt.

“What is this.....”

“I'm a slime, so I keep my appearance as plain as possible, but if I want I can change the breasts and many more things just as you are seeing right now.”

When she says that, her breasts swing in a seductive manner. Simon instinctively stares on them, a man cannot look away from a good thing.

“That aside, what do you think?”

“Eh, erm, what do you mean.....?”

Susu takes a forward-bent posture to look in Simon's eyes as he is short in height. Just below her face, was the deep cleavage peeking out of her shirt. Simon tries to avert his line of sight with his face completely red. Susu notices his innocent actions.

“What I mean is—”

But it is impossible for Simon, who is a noob in relationship experiences, to know what was going on Susu's mind.

“—This thing”

Before Simon knew it, his right hand was gripped and even before he could resist his hand touched the great mountains.

A soft and warm feeling reaches his palm. The only thing between is a thin shirt. The feeling alone is enough to shatter the calmness of a man into pieces.

“Waaaa!?! S-Sorry, It's already time for me to sleep! See you later!!”

However, looks like it was too much for Simon to handle.

Simon, in a panic, shakes Susu off and ran off with a really red face towards his room.

“Ahaha, he’s really cute—”

Susu sees Simon off with a smile,

“—I might get serious next time”

Saying that one phrase, Susu left from that place without making any sound.

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The Crusaders stationed in Vato Village, in truth they should have occupied Alsace Village by now.

But they were obstructed by the defensive line of demons hiding in Alsace Village. Anyhow, now they will have to stay in Vato Village for some time. That is the same for the Cyprus mercenaries too. They were, as usual, at the campsite away from Vato Village.

Cyprus who is always lazy should have been in the bed with his women subordinates in night but he is currently within the forest that is a little away from the camp site.

Cyprus is leaning against a long tree. In his hand is a short wand.

At one glance it looks like a branch of a black tree, but on it’s surface white colored geometrical pattern is drawn all over and it’s ends are sharp like that of a spear.

“Handing me a fucking old version of ‘Aranea’, this is crap. It’s a hassle to activate its effects everyday, bastards!”

While saying complaints towards the person who handed the ‘Aranea’ to him he stabs the tip of the wand in the ground.

«العدوك بوت الارق يق لمعالجة سرية مراقبة»

The wand reacts to Cyprus’s chant and the white geometrical pattern starts glowing.

Along with that the point where the wand is stabbed, the white pattern starts spreading on the ground.

The magic circle of 1 metre was created. It seems like a spider’s web.

“—Aranea”

The magic he used is Summon, the ones who came out are, just as the name says, Spider servant.

From inside the spider web, many black spiders crawl out as if coming out of water.

The sight of many large spiders gushing out from the ground will give an unpleasant feeling to any person instinctively.

But Cyprus, the summoner shows no expression as if saying that it is natural and sees off the spiders.

The spiders disappear towards the other side of the dark forest in the blink of an eye. However, they all come back within 1 minute.

“.....Tsk, many have been reduced. this shitty product.”

Their appearance is the same as the ones he just summoned but they are the ones which were summoned yesterday. The work of ‘Aranea’ is observing. [ET: The spiders that came back were the ones he sent yesterday not the ones he summoned right now.]

The Cyprus mercenaries were ordered to remain in Vato Village and so he used this servant to observe the flow of fight.

“Demon this and that, these bastards came back after losing. Well then let’s see what happened there—”

Cyprus takes one spider on his hand.

And then the fragments of images and sounds emerge inside his mind.

To read from this demon, a skill is needed, but for Cyprus who summoned them it is really easy to read all the data recorded in them.

“—Whoa, Elf Girl discovered. This is good, this is what I was searching for.”

A picture of three elves with blond hair and blue eyes appears, the face of the three is really beautiful.

He then sees the scene of soldiers dying due to the lightning arrows fired by the three.

“Nh—but with just the demons, this much casualties—-”

Cyprus was going to say some foolish phrase but while he is watching the video in his mind his face color changed.

At first he was showing off a smile while looking for his prey, but now all the emotions have gone from his face.

“—Hmm, I see, so that’s how it was”

Cyprus throws the spider in hand while murmuring.

The spider runs towards the magic circle and disappears like a frog jumping inside a pond.

“Interesting, now this is what i was waiting for. Hehe, it’s like the fate is guiding me.”

Just what might be giving him this much joy?

Cyprus returned back to the campsite in a good mood.

Chapter 115 - Bombardment (1)

The night of the 2nd had ended. It was now the 3rd.

As the sun rose, beyond the Rone river shining with the light of the sun, the army of white once again appeared.

From the roof of the guild, where I stand, I can look even till the north west highway on the other shore of the river.

From what I have seen from here, it seems the Crusaders have advance as far the start of the river on the other shore, but since the forest is spread on the sides, I can't accurately estimate their numbers.

"They don't seem to be crossing through today."

"Yeah, they might have made some other preparations."

Beside me, Simon talked to me while holding the first ever sniper rifle of this world, [Yatagarasu].

Early morning, after hearing the report that the enemy had been sighted, I had quickly climbed to the highest point here but, I don't know what they're planning since they haven't advanced at all in the last 30mins.

If they were going to rush in like yesterday, I would have to get down from here and once again start firing my bullet arts in front of the protective wall.

But, since the enemy is not showing any movement, I have nothing to do but look at them like this. There's no merit for us to attack them first either.

It would be fine if we could just continue this glaring competition for the next whole week, but the enemy isn't that big of a fool either. If they aren't attacking from the front, that means they must have some other plans.

"But it's quite cramped to have 3 people here, right?"

Su-san complained nonchalantly suddenly.

Certainly, the pedestal created for Simon for sniping isn't very big.

To have 1 child and 2 adults together is certainly over the capacity.

"Sorry, but this place is the best vantage point here."

Since the enemy is in front of us, I need to keep an eye on them after all.

"I don't really mind it. As long I and Simon have enough space to huddle together."(susu)

"No, I mind that.....please move away a bit."(simon)

Su-san held Simon from behind in a hug.

Su-san, whose breasts became big for some reason, was resting them on Simon's head magnificently.

"You two really get along well."(kuroono)

Is the so called Girl's love (T/N:yuri, lesbo) everyone talked about?

"fufun, you jealous?"(susu)

"A little."(kuroono)

"If you really think that then help me, Onii-san!!"(simon)

Simon complained with tears in her eyes. Yup, this alchemist is cute today as well.

While being calmed down by cuteness that was a bit different from Lily's, I ate my breakfast bread and drank some milk with the other hand.

This mysterious milk taken from an animal that might be some kind of cow or goat tastes a little different, but I have already gotten used to it so it feels tasty as usual.

While I was emptying the milk container in a single gulp,

"By the way, Kuroono didn't even look at my bigger breasts even once. Are you gay?"(susu)

BUHOOOO!!

The white milk shined from the sun rays, of course, I was the one who spat it all out.

"Uaah!? Onii-san that's dirty!!"

"Buha, geho, what the hell are you saying suddenly!?"(kuroono)

I glared at Su-san who just dropped a bombshell level of comment while I was enjoying my milk.

“No, I mean, human males tend to chase after big breasts and since you didn’t do something like that I thought that it might be so——”(susu)

“Eh, is that true Onii-san!?”

“Don’t believe her Simon, it’s just a misunderstanding. I’m perfectly straight.”

“fumu, I heard the same thing yesterday as well.”(susu)

“Haa?”

“No, don’t mind it.”(susu)

Fufufu, Su-san laughed boldly. How can you be horsing around when the enemy is in front of you!

“So what’s it like seriously?”(susu)

“I said I’m straight! Of course I’ll prefer a cute girl over a guy. Sheesh, if you think every man likes big breasts then you’re gravely mistaken.”

“Then, are you a Lolicon?”(susu)

“Of course not.”(kurono)

“There was the case with Lily so I thought that this might actually be more credible.”(susu)

“.....That’s true.”(Simon)

“Don’t agree with her Simon. Or rather, stop putting the label of a weird fetish on me already.”

Do you have some kind of grudge against me Su-san?

“fumu, then I won’t pursue this topic any further.”

Do you really have no interest in big boobs? She looked at me with gaze that implied that question as she wrapped her huge breasts around Simon’s head.

That's, really something that most men would never forget.

"haa, Whenever I look at big breasts, I end up remembering her....."

My mom. She really had a huge chest. Since I had seen them from when I was a child, I had already lost any interest in them by the time I grew up.

I wonder whether that's a good thing or a bad one. Well, since I never really looked at people with big breasts with impolite eyes due to that, it must have been a good thing.

"Ah, Onii-san's eyes have become distant suddenly."

"fuumu, it seems our leader is a really stoic man."

For the time being, it's all good since the topic ended with the fact that I have no abnormal sexual fetish. I drank the remaining milk while thinking that.

But still, due to thinking about my home, I ended up feeling like eating white rice suddenly.

Here, the main grain is wheat so bread is the staple food. I know, after going to Spada, I'll search for some rice, yeah let's do that.

While I was indulging myself in nostalgia, at that moment,

"Oh no, it's an attack!"

Just as Su-san shouted, I heard the start of chanting.

"What the hell is that!?"

From the forest, pillars of flame rose, No, those are balls of flames. They are falling towards here in a parabola while leaving a trail of smoke and flames behind them.

A total of 5 of them.

"Lie down, Simon! —الصلب الجليد درع الـ باردة تجميد منع هيروشيكي يكو [Ice Armour Shield]!"

Su-san covered Simon with her whole body and above her, an intermediate level defensive ice magic deployed to protect them.

“[Black Shield]!”(kuroono)

I also deployed a shield to protect myself for the time being.

The instant the black shield was deployed,

DODODODOO!!

Shock waves and heat waves ran through.

One of the fire balls had i=unfortunately hit the roof of the building.

“Is everyone alright!?”(kuroono)

“We are, but—“(susu)

Without even listening to her words, I saw the archers that were standing on the roof as many of them had their bodies swallowed in flames.

“Shit!”

I, who could only use black magic, had no efficient way to extinguish the flames.

As I thought what to do, Su-san and the other safe adventurers moved first.

They quickly used ice and water type magics to extinguish the flames on those who were burning.

“Oi, you alright?”

Jumping down from the pedestal, I ran towards the adventurers.

“haahaa, we’re alive somehow.”

Even though their hair ends had been burned off, one of the beast type adventurers answered with a smile.

Others who had been burnt raised cries of pain and agony sometimes but were already using potions to heal themselves.

Seriously, all these adventurers are really tough. Thanks to that, everyone was still calm.

“I didn’t think they’ll use a bombardment like that. But its power doesn’t seem to be very high.”

The place where the fireball had landed felt a bit scorched but since I had already blackened the whole building, it really was difficult to distinguish it much.

If it had been as it was originally, that is, made of wood, it would have caught fire but with just this level of attack the guild now would never catch fire.

“For the time being, retreat back inside the guild! Su-san, I leave the treatment of the injured and evacuation to you. I’m going down.”(kurono)

“Roger that.”(susu)

I was heading towards the protective wall. There were more adventurers there to act as guards. I need to quickly tell them to go back inside the guild as well.

“Oi, another round is coming!!”

From behind, someone’s voice came, and once again another fireball appeared.

“Shit! To use bombarding attacks from such a long range—-[Anchor Hand].”

I didn’t even have the time to normally go down the steps. The best and shortest way was to jump down directly from the roof.

It was the improved version of the [anchor] I used back at Deadalus to climb the castle walls. It looks pretty much the same as that time but it had become able to change its shape freely like a tentacle allowing for even more complicated maneuvers.

The black wire-like tentacles that stretched out of both my hands fixed themselves on the railing of the roof and I threw myself in the air.

At the same time, another fireball hit the roof and exploded.

But the heat waves and shock waves didn’t reach me as I was already running vertically on the walls of the guild.

Chapter 116 - Bombardment (2)

“Take shelter inside the guild for the time being! Hurry up!”

I gave the orders to take shelter in a loud voice after reaching the protective wall.

These guys weren't villagers but adventurers. They calmly followed my orders even under this rain of fireballs.

“Oi, what the hell is this rain of flames? It's really annoying.”

Vulcan had raised his large sword overhead as an umbrella and made a really irritated face.

Many of the fireballs dropped near Vulcan but they were quickly absorbed by his sword in no time.

[Evil Eater] really is an amazing ability. With such an item I can understand why Vulcan is so composed.

“They're firing these little things from afar. Should I go all out and take care of them right now?”(Vulcan)

“No, I want to avoid attacking as much as I can.”

“Then what should we do? Should we just sit here while they shoot at us?”

The fireballs only seem to be getting even more vigorous.

Each and every one of them has an effect of spreading fire in a radius of few meters from the landing point but its explosiveness is not really great.

Now then, I wonder if this is the maximum power of this long ranged attack or are they holding back the power? If they could carpet bomb with an explosiveness of TNT of 10 kilotons, even our remains will be destroyed.

No, since they had retreated yesterday, I doubt they think that our defensive line is the same as yesterday, then, they don't have any reason to hold back during their second attack.

“We have no choice but to bear with this. They're trying to lure us out.”(kuronono)

“Haa?”

“Vulcan, you asked me to attack instantly right? Then basically, anyone would want to do that.”

“Well of course. Anyone who stays silent even when he’s being made fun of like this is just a coward.”

“That’s right. They have brought their army because they expect us to come out and attack. That army isn’t there for protecting the magicians who are doing the bombardment. I’m sure they are waiting on the other side of the river to take revenge for yesterday.”

If we were to attack by crossing the river, then this time we’ll be the ones who’d get attacked while crossing the river. Also, they should have more archers and magicians than us as well. Even without a machinegun, they could easily repel us 100 adventurers.

“.....Then, we have no choice but stay cooped up inside the guild, is that it?”

“Yeah. I should probably send out some scouts but yes that’s what we’ll have to do.”

Looking at the landing point of the fireballs, they must be hidden pretty close to the river. We might be able to take out the magicians with a well planned surprise attack, but the risk is quite high.

“Is that fine? The enemy might not come charging like yesterday you know?”(Vulcan)

“Look, many of the fireballs are falling near the river as well. They can’t even accurately aim. If they came charging, then they’ll have to stop this bombardment as well.”

If they don’t they’ll hit quite a lot of their allies as well. I think even those Crusaders would want to avoid something like that.

“If only the soldiers come charging, I and Mossan can hold them off quickly.”(kuroono)

“Tch, can’t be helped then.”

With a reluctant Vulcan, I also took refuge inside the guild.

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Lily came up to meet me as I entered the guild.

“Kurono! Are you alright!?”

“n, you’re awake Lily? Yeah I’m fine.”

She must have awakened due to the sound of the fireballs. At least she was still asleep when I woke during midnight, that too in my bed for some reason.

Anyway, looking at her, it seems she has recovered mostly. Even if the Pegasus Knights do not come, Lily still has various other jobs like using Telepathy and healing magic as well.

“Where’s Fiona?”(kurono)

The one I need right now isn’t Lily but Fiona.

“She’s eating over there.”

In the direction where Lily’s small finger pointed, I saw the witch challenging a plate filled with a mountain of the same type of bread I was eating on the roof.

It’s not like she hasn’t noticed the enemy’s bombardment, but still to eat at such a time, she really does things at her own pace.

“Fiona.”

“Oh Kurono-san, Good Morning.”

Her golden eyes looked this way but her mouth is filled with bread as her cheeks are filled up. Are you a hamster!?

“Ou, good morning. Since you’re eating breakfast so elegantly, it’s fine to think that the enemy’s attack is not a big deal right?”

“n, that’s right—*gokugoku*”(T/N:sound of drinking)

Before answering she drank her milk from her cup, no, her giant mug.

I wonder if she'll also spew everything out brilliantly like me if I asked 'Is Fiona a lesbian?' at such timing?

I'm afraid of what'll happen after that so I decide not to ask such a thing.

"puhaa——its firepower is on the same level as [Ignis Sagita]. It's just a simple attack with [long range catapult] technique included in it. I guess there's no problem since Kurono-san came to me."

"So it was the right decision to not attack."

"Yes, it must be a tactic to bring out the simple-minded 'demons' from their pov. Even if we don't go out, they'd fine if the guild building catches fire."

"I see. So my prediction was right more or less."

As long as we are in the guild, this bombardment is nothing more than a disturbing noise to us but if we go out carelessly, there's the danger to be burnt badly so I want to avoid that as much as possible.

"Is there any method to deal with it?"(kurono)

"Won't it be fine if we fire back as well?"(Fiona)

"How many magicians do we have that can actually do that?....."

"That's true. Even if it's a simple magic, it's still a Union magic used by multiple magicians together after all, I doubt we'd be able to do a proper bombardment."

Only those who have cooperated and practiced as a team can use Union magic.

We quite a lot of skilled magician adventurers among us but they are all specialized in solo play. A strong team won't be created just by gathering some strong magicians randomly. Especially, it's impossible to learn how to use a Union magic in such a short span of time.

"If only we had a cannon or something."(kurono)

I guess I'm asking for too much. Even a genius alchemist like Simon wouldn't be able to build a cannon so quickly. In the first place, we have neither the materials nor the facilities to do that.

"How about having just Lily-san attack from the air?"(Fiona)

"If the Pegasus Knights came inside those 30mins, we'll probably be defeated."

"I guess so."

The girl Lily held fearsome strength to face off against the Pegasus Knights alone but there's a time limit of 30mins in which she can show her full strength. I can't let her go to the front lines recklessly.

Rather than that, since we have no other force that can fight against Pegasus Knights in mid air, I can't have her sortie until they appear.

"And don't treat Lily like a convenient pawn."(Kurono)

"I think she'll happily go and attack if Kurono-san asks her though."(Fiona)

"I can actually imagine that so let's stop."

In my mind, I imagined Lily sortieing while wearing a headband with 'Kamikaze' written on it.

Since Lily really is too honest and obedient, she really might do so if asked.

"For the time being, let's put up observers to make sure the enemy doesn't start charging and prepare if the building gets damaged. Also, we need to accurately discern the position of the magician squad so we can plan a proper surprise attack."

If we only use members that have high agility, it's not exactly impossible.

But the fact that they're hiding like that inside the forest, they must have become precautions due to Simon's sniping yesterday.

"Isn't a surprise attack too risky?"(Fiona)

"I don't really want to do it either but if the adventurers start getting too dissatisfied, I won't be able to help it."

"I see, they do seem the type who don't like staying inside their rooms."

“Well, by tomorrow or day after tomorrow, the enemy would probably start charging again so I’m not really worried too much about it.”

“How can you say that they won’t attack today?”

“They had been obstructed so much in the river just yesterday, the next time they come they’ll at least prepare a bridge or a boat, in the worst case, they might even prepare a raft.”

“.....I see. Certainly that does seem plausible.”

“If only the soldiers are coming, we can simply repel them back like yesterday. But if they prepare a way to cross the river, the next battle will become much harsher. After all, the heavy knights and magicians will also come to this side.”

The 1st time the enemy attacked with only force and vigour so we were able to successfully push them back.

But the next, the enemy will come at full alert and then it’ll be the true battle.

“In the end, the things we can do now are limited.”(Fiona)

“Yeah, let’s just wait patiently till the enemy comes charging here.”(kurono)

Chapter 117 - The Situation on the Opposite Shore

Estel who had been officially named as the commander of the Pegasus Knights was standing with dishevelled brown short hair and a clear drowsy face.

As long as she remains silent, her tall height and well proportioned face would give an impression of a gallant young woman but her slackened expression was spoiling her own atmosphere.

yawn Estel who opened her mouth large as she yawned didn't even feel the tension of the situation where she might need to go into the battlefield at any moment.

"Cover your mouth with your hand when yawning, it's immodest."

The one reprimanded her was the eldest member of the squad, Flan.

She had been also officially appointed as the vice-commander of the Pegasus Knights.

"She enjoyed a lot yesterday!"

"So it can't be helped!"

The two who said that with indecent smiles on their faces were the sisters, Camy and Cathy.

"Shut up, be silent stupid sisters."(estel)

She glared towards the two sisters with an even sharper gaze than her usual, but the sisters seemed unaffected probably because they had gotten used to it.

"Um, what do you mean by 'enjoyed'?"

The one who asked that innocently was the youngest of the squad, Maty.

"You don't need to know yet."

Flan who decided that it was not something to be told to a child, drove Maty away to the other side.

With a question mark floating above her head, Maty shook her redhair side tail and left obediently.

“But still, aren’t you a bit too relaxed? If we get an order to attack, our opponent will definitely be that Fairy, we’ll need to—”(flan)

“That’s exactly why, Flan. That cheeky fairy bitch won’t come out from such a shabby bombardment.”(estel)

Also that black box (building) doesn’t seem like it’ll get destroyed either, explained Estel.

“But our opponents are demons, you know?”(flan)

“They aren’t ‘stupid’ as we think. At least they have better brains than Camy and Cathy.”(estel)

What’s that supposed to mean!?—voices of protest came from her side, but Estel ignored it and spoke further.

“Probably, she’s the strongest demon with a DP inside Alsace, then she’ll be the boss, or something close to that position. If those guys with proper intelligent minds are at the top, they won’t take any stupid actions.”(estel)

The Pegasus Knights were currently acting as the escort for the magician squad conducting the bombardment on the Alsace village.

Although only one, if the enemy has a strong enough fighter that can fly, there was a need to protect the magicians from any attacks from the air. And the only one who could do that was these girls’ squad.

Conversely speaking, as long as Lily doesn’t appear, they have no job to do. They just have to stay on standby inside the forest till the bombardment ends.

If Estel’s words were correct, not just Lily, even other demons would probably not come out. And considering that not a single demon was seen even after some time had passed after the start of the bombardment, it was atleast half correct.

“Well, let’s rest as much as we can while we have the chance. My crotch hurts, I don’t want to sit on a horse right now.”(estel)

Ahaha, Estel laughed vulgarly as Flan showed fed up face and gave a sigh.

“I don’t think anyone would like being forced into it you know? Even if the other party is a man.”

Inside Flan’s head, the scene from last night came to her mind. Estel went and invited one of the medic boy to her tent, no, kidnapped him and took him inside her tent.

“Then I’ll be gentler tonight.”(estel)

“.....um, this is still a battlefield in case you have forgotten.”(flan)

“It’s fine. I’ll make sure nobody finds out.”

Flan really had no choice but to sigh again. Although not to the levels of Camy and Cathy, Estel was also a problem child back when they were in the military academy as well. She wasn’t the type that’ll obediently listen to what other say.

“I’m might die next. I’ll have as much fun as I can in the time being.”(estel)

“You’re speaking timidly unusually. Did you get attached to the man?”

“That might be so.”

Estel answered Flan’s sarcastic question with a serious face and without any anger. Then her sight moved towards her wounded left arm.

As a Pegasus Knight she had received preferential treatment and thus it had healed enough to be able to move freely again but the scars had still remained.

“But, I need to pay back the debt to that bitch for my comrades and this arm as well.”

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At the camp of the Cyprus mercenary group built a bit away from the Vato village, the 87 members were currently standing in the central vacant area.

Since they were not an army, they stood without any order or lines and were simply standing however they pleased.

“Say, he isn’t going to suddenly say that he is dismissing us all here right?”

Ai who was hugging Tsumiki, talked with another one of the merc that was standing near her.

“No way. We haven’t even done anything like an actual job after coming here even once. Maybe we are finally getting to do something?”

A man much larger than Ai and had a face very typical of a mercenary, answered.

“Those guys from Crusaders weren’t able to capture that whatever village, right? Hehe this is a chance to quickly earn a name for ourselves!”

The one who said that energetically was a young boy mercenary, no he was an adventurer to be exact, but had joined with the Cyprus mercs for the Pandora expedition just like Ai.

“Chance, is it? But I feel that we won’t really get to do something like that. I feel that there’s a wall between the original members and us adventurers who joined later.”

“Well that’s true. They look like normal mercs at a glance but they’re somehow very obedient. It’s really uncanny.”

“Ah, I felt the same! I haven’t even been able to even talk to them properly. They’re definitely hiding something!”

They looked towards the original members of the group with eyes of suspicion.

The group was originally made of around 30 people but for the Pandora expedition, they recruited members from the guilds and as a result 50 adventurers like Ai also participated with them.

However although they were an 87 man mercenary group travelling together, but from the adventurer’s pov the members who were already a part of the group felt a bit weird to them.

It was just as how the man or the boy had said. They rarely spoke and were too obedient for mercenaries who used violence to control everything.

Although, due to that there were no disputes or troubles among the adventurers and the mercs and it was always the adventurer side that started a quarrel.

“It’s a rumour but apparently they are a slave army.”

“That commander Cyprus sure loves to throw money but it still seems a bit unbelievable. But I guess a young man from a rich family leading a ‘brainwashed’ slave army fits quite well as well.”

If that’s true, then it seemed more plausible if he was forcefully leading them through the use of authority.

“Well, does it even matter? We’ll make do even if that flippant leader ran away. We are adventurers after all!”

“That’s true, well, even then, it might be good to be dismissed earlier.”

“Oi, he came out.”

As Ai raised her eyes on the man’s words, Cyprus came and stood over a wooden box-like stand with his usual listless expression.

As usual he wasn’t wearing any armour either and his clothes left his chest bare and his tone was still the same joking-like even when he was in front of all his members.

“Ah, has everyone gathered? It’s troublesome so I’ll keep this short. We are going to attack that whatever village where those demons are.”

A commotion rose among the members, but, it wasn’t really too surprising either.

Since they were unable to defeat the enemy yesterday, this time they were going to use the mercenary group to try and corner those demons. Since they had brought these mercs along, they needed to use them as well.

“We’ll depart tomorrow and attack them just like that. Well, everyone prepare suitably as you wish, that’s it, dismissed.”

Without taking even a single question or doubt, Cyprus quickly left the place.

“Uoohh!! A proper job finally!!”

Starting with the boy, most of the adventurers were happy that their turn had come.

But Ai's expression wasn't very good.

"haah, I really have a bad feeling about this."



Chapter 118 - Sacrificial Pawn

The next day, on the 4th of Hatsuhi, the fireball bombardment was still continuing from early morning.

“Just because they have a lot of magicians, it doesn’t mean they have to fire so many stupidly, geez.....”

As I looked outside from the window of the guild, I suddenly noticed a group different from the white crusaders even beyond the river shore.

That is.....

“Are they a mercenary group perhaps?”(Fiona)

“Uooh!? Don’t appear so suddenly Fiona.”

It seems the witch, who appeared beside me out of nowhere, could also see that group.

“But all of their outfits looked different just like us.”(kuroono)

“Yes, due to the Pandora expedition all the adventurers had been recruited by various mercenary groups and it seems, the various Crusader squads have hired these groups.”(fiona)

“Oh right, Fiona was also a mercenary earlier, right?”

“Accurately speaking, I was an adventurer that became a part of one of the merc groups. But at my time, Virginia felt like it’ll fall sooner or later so there weren’t many people there.”

“So it’s different now, is it?”

To conquer all of the territory of Daedalus, the Crusaders received various reinforcements from their HQ. it seems the mercenaries were no exception either.

“Are they strong?”

“There are those who are famous for being strong; strong to beat us easily even if they fight us head on, but other than those rare exceptions, rest are simply not worth mentioning. They just rely on numbers for everything.”

“I see. So which one are those guys?”

“The strong merc groups will use the same equipment and flag like an army. Since they don’t have something like that, they must be some random merc group.”

I’m relieved that they are not strong enough that we need to be extremely cautious against.

But, just a single group of mercs had the same number as ours. They’ll give the same level of threat as the Crusader army.

As I was thinking such things, a report from one of the surveillance squad came to me using Lily’s telepathy network.

“Kuronsan, an enemy squad, that seems like mercenaries are heading towards us. They are already near the opposite shore.”

This voice belonged to one of the rank 1 Summoner who used Windwolves as servants.

In such a situation where I can’t send everyone around the village, such guys are a really big help.

“I can see them from here as well. The bombardment is still going on but we have no choice but to move out right now.”

I looked towards Fiona and asked.

“We had turned them to swiss cheese just the day before yesterday with our crossfire but still they are sending the merc squad as a sacrificial pawn, is that what the enemy commander is thinking?”

“In such a harsh battle, it has always been the mercenaries who have to bear the full brunt first. They are the ones who are hired after all, it’ll be fine as long as they could at least die fighting, right?”

“I see. I learnt something new again——”

Concentrating on the telepathy, I notified each and every adventurer holding up inside the guild.

“—The enemy is coming, get to battle positions!”

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“Ooh. So that’s the rumoured black box! It really is completely black!”

While being on the shore of the Rone river that was being rained with arrows and lightning, Ai nonchalantly gave her impression.

In front of her, she could see the various mercs, without any sense of unity, trying to cross the river while clinging on to a log.

Compared to the day before yesterday, the logs made things better but the actual situation of the battle was in fact deteriorating instead.

The demons didn’t have a lot of archers but their accuracy was top class. Just like before, due to the lightning magic, electric current ran through the river and many of them were drowning due to it.

And the worst thing was,

“What!? Oi, what was he shot by!?”

“Someone put up a shield! We can’t move forward with so many difficulties like this!!”

With a *giyarigiyari* sound, countless black bullets were flying all over the place.

Its source was from two places. One was a magician in full black clothes who was firing from his baton and the other was a skeleton demon, who looked exactly like the reaper from fairy tales, who was firing the bullets from a weird tube like item.

The crossfire created through the firing of the sure kill black bullets were the same as the day before yesterday. Any idiot who tried attacking directly from the front was instantly slaughtered.

But those who had defensive magic or defensive martial arts were still somehow alive even inside that black storm.

“C’mon c’mon, hurry up and move guys! Let’s go and kill some demons gyahahaha!”

The only one who was still getting fired up even in such a situation was the commander Cyprus.

Just as Ai had thought, he clearly showed that he did not care even a single bit about the lives of his subordinates.

But still, the mercs who were crossing the river and were starting to attack did not even hear his voice.

“nn? Aah, thank god, Ai-chan had not yet started attacking.” (Cyprus)

With his usual grinning face, he approached Ai who was also standing on the riverside.

“Uwah.”

And the same as usual, Ai also showed her plain displeased face. But if he were to back off from just that, Cyprus wouldn’t have involved with her in the first place.

“Wow the demons’ attacks are really amazing, everyone’s so desperate. But really thank god, if Ai-chan had gone there then——“

Cyprus gave a glance towards the other shore. In his view, one by one, mercs, whose names he didn’t even know were spewing blood and falling.

“——You would have clearly died. That would really be troublesome after all I have yet to lay my hands on you. You can’t die just like that, I have few sources of enjoyment anyway.”

“Oh, then you should go there and do something about it.”

Ai pointed towards the Alsace’s gate as she glared towards Cyprus with disgusted eyes.

There, a magician whose defensive magic had been destroyed was blown away from the volley of bullets.

“No way no way, I would be an idiot to go there.”

“Haa? Weren’t you the one who ordered the attack?”

“That’s because the old man Norz gave me that job? If I didn’t do it I won’t get the money, you know? Well, it seems quite a lot have died already, I should probably call them back now, lol.”(T/N: I know he doesn’t actually say ‘lol’ but that perfectly fits the way he spoke those last lines which made it necessary.)

If I can earn money like this then merc work is super easy! Guffawed Cyprus as he said that. Ai glared at him with disdain and said.

“If you’re going to return then do it alone.”(ai)

“Eh, what? Ai-chan could it be that you want to attack as well? Let’s not do that, c’mon, let’s return together and do good things with me.”

Ai nimble dodged Cyprus who cheekily stretched his arms towards her.

“I told you to not touch me. Rather than going back with you, I’d rather go there.”

“Oioi, are you serious, just be more obedient and——“

“Then, let’s go shall we Tsumiki?”

Ignoring Cyprus’ words, Ai took her cat Tsumiki and moved towards the river.

Since she had already moved away from Cyprus, she didn’t know what kind of expression he was making but Ai had no interest to know it either.

Just in front of Ai was where the river started and many other mercs were also about to depart. She moved towards one of the logs to go towards the other mercs.

“Alright, let’s go!”

“”OU!!””

“Ou!”

The brave shouts of the mercs and the stupid sounding shout of Ai were raised in a chorus.

And thus the mercs started rowing towards the river that was still quite cold.

From the air, the rain of arrows and lightning still continued.

“Uoh, close!!”

The man in front of Ai blocked an arrow that was coming with perfect precision towards her with his buckler.

“ooh, thanks old man!” (Ai)

“Don’t call me an old man! Or rather, aren’t you an archer as well? Why don’t you fire back a little?!”

“Ah, is that so? Then, I’ll fire with all I’ve got!!”

With a full smile, Ai skilfully climbed over the log. By the way, tsumiki was over her head currently.

Ai held the log between her pretty legs underneath her miniskirt and took a stable stance.

The reason the log didn’t roll over was because other mercs were also using it as a support.

“You’ll shoot from there?”

“I’ll shoot with all I’ve got so I leave advancing to you guys.” (Ai)

“Even though you’re so heavy.”

“How rude!!” (ai)

Just fire already! Everyone looked at Ai with eyes filled with reproach.

“Then here I go!”

It was suspicious whether she was dependable during battles. Ai who set up her old looking wooden bow, nocked an arrow and stretched the bowstring to its very limits.

“Take this!”

Such a noisy woman! As the other mercs had such thoughts, the arrow was fired from Ai’s bow.

With a flimsy unreliable trajectory, the arrow flew towards the far away horizon.

“Well, I didn’t really expect much in the first place.”(Merc 1)

“Well, as long as it didn’t hit an ally, it’s fine.”(merc2)

As they looked at Ai with a fed up face, Ai made a bitter *gununu* sound.

“It’s fine so come down already. It’s not like it’ll reach from here anyway.”

“Eh, wait, one more time, let me shoot one more time!”(Ai)

“Shut up, just get down alrea—shit!?”

“Huh?”

When Ai looked towards the front, a lightning magic attack, [Line Sagita] rushed towards her from the front.

Bachiiin!!

With the sound of an electricity bursting,

“abababaah!!”

Ai who took a direct hit fell down from the log.

“Oi, little girl!?”

The lightning that exploded travelled to the bodies of the mercs as well as pain and numbness ran through their bodies.

They, who were doing their best just to cling on to the log so that they don’t drown, had no time to go and save Ai.

And furthermore, this was the centre of the river. The depth was enough that their feet didn’t reach the ground. With paralysed limbs, her fate would only be to drown in the end.

“Shit, so pitiful.”

Ai who had been flown away by the river was sent off by the mercs and was swept downstream.

Chapter 119 - Cyprus Mercenary Group Annihilated

Was it a dream or an illusion, to have seen that figure again?

“That girl is.....”

It was about one week ago when I went to Irz for applying the scorched earth tactics that the enemy scout squad had attacked.

The scout troop was made with 7 people. Among them, there was one girl who seemed like a misfit there, I certainly remember her.

She had been able to climb over the wall we had created to trap them, but she should have been burned to ashes after getting attacked by Fiona’s fire magic.

But, that supposedly dead girl, with blond twintails and wearing a bow, could be clearly seen in my view.

But by the time I became aware of her, she got hit by a lightning magic attack and disappeared after falling down the log and into the river.

“Did I see wrong? No, she was definitely——”

But in the Rone river in front of me, let alone her, there are no mercs left either.

They, who had recklessly attacked without any support from the crusaders, took huge casualties and had run away just now.

It seems they had prepared at least logs to cross the river but they were nothing more than floating supports, they didn’t really increase the speed in crossing the river much.

It only increased their chances of not drowning even when hit by lightning arrows.

But it didn’t have any effect on the result of the battle. And now, the bombardment had once again begun.

“I guess it’s no use thinking about that girl anymore.”

I had only seen her for an instant. It must be some kind of mistake, or misunderstanding. There's even a chance that it was a twin or a look-alike as well.

What I need to think is not about that but how to deal with this bombardment.

"The enemy has retreated! We should also hurry up and withdraw! Be careful of the fireballs. Magicians, use defensive magic shields to cover as much as possible!!"

With the sound of agreement, the adventurers deployed in front of the protective wall once again evacuated towards the guild.

"Pull carefully and quickly! If this got blown up it'll be all over!!"(Mozrun)

Mossan and the 2 goblins quickly pulled the carriage on which the machinegun was kept.

I once again realized that it was a good decision to have not fixed it at a single place and made it movable through carriages.

During the bombardment it can be kept safe like this in the guild's storage.

"What's the damage report?"

I asked for the report through Lily's telepathic network.

To be able to talk handsfree both ways is really convenient.

On my question, the reply quickly came inside my head.

"Deceased 1. Injured 3. Slightly injured ones are in dozens but they'll soon become perfect after receiving healing."

"I see. Quickly get to treating them."

Another one died.

Even without hearing the report, I did see one of the arrows fired by the mercs striking down an adventurer near the protective wall.

Probably, it was fired to attack me who was firing bullets with my magic bullet arts.

If the arrow had gone as it was aimed and hit me; a single arrow wouldn't really have been any trouble for me.....I feel regretful but I can't let that depress me.

For the person who took the arrow in place of me as well, I must continue fighting.

Mourning for dead will come after all this is over.

"But, it seems they really were used as sacrificial pawns."

It was anti-climatic how we so quickly were able to repel them off.

Although I don't know what the enemy was thinking to make the mercs so uselessly attack like this, I do feel pity for them.

But that doesn't mean I'm going to show any kind of mercy to someone who tries to cross this river.

And, bombardment continued for the whole day and there was no other attack. And so, we had protected the defensive line for the 3rd day.

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"The Cyprus mercenary group seems to have been annihilated. Only 21 came back alive. And along with the leader Cyprus, most of the original members have gone missing."

Norz gave a smile after hearing Sister Sylvia's report.

"I see. It's refreshing to think that grinning face is now at the bottom of the river."

Norz had always felt unpleasant about the fact that he had to take that group of mercs with him since the Cardinal Mercedes had ordered so directly.

It would have been one thing if he had hired them himself because he considered it necessary, but there was no way he would silently accept it just because his superior asked him to take them with him.

On top of that, the leader Cyprus had a personality who liked fooling around. There was no way such a guy would be able to build good relationships with anyone, let alone the short tempered Norz.

“But, is that fine? To just use them and throw them away like that? In a situation where you hid most of the info regarding the defences of the village, isn’t it as good as deceiving them?”

When Norz had asked Cyprus to attack the village he quickly received ‘OK!’ from Cyprus and did not tell anything about the ‘attack of the Devil’ or about the strong resistance showed by the demons.

“Cardinal Mercedes had only asked me to take them to Pandora continent with me. He didn’t ask me to bring them back alive as well.”(norz)

“Isn’t that just sophistry?”

“No, regarding their treatment, I was told that I can treat them the same way as any merc group would be as long as I take them with me. There’s no problem even if they got annihilated during their ‘jobs’.”

In the end, Norz had no idea why Cardinal Mercedes had asked him to take this merc group with him, but he had already taken care of that troublesome group, he had no need to think about useless things. He could be happy without hiding anything.

“Is that so? What to do with those who came back alive?”

“Abandon them, is what I want to say but it’ll become troublesome later. Pay them as per the contract and ask them to leave. They’re just impertinent mercenaries, after facing something like that, they’ll happily go back.”

“Then, as you say.”

Sylvia completed the decree quickly and gave it to one of the soldiers.

With this, the order would be executed as per Norz’s will. Since they, the employer, was obediently paying them, there won’t be any problems from their side.

“But, that ‘Devil’s’ attack really is troublesome.”

Norz knit his brows. After seeing the mercs being pulverised under the enemy's crossfire, he once again realized the power of that attack.

"Since they were able to use it today as well without any problems, it means that there's no use limit or time limit on it."

The limit Sylvia talked about wasn't regarding the number of bullets or the barrel that needed to bear exhaustion while firing.

It was regarding a more stronger, magical limit that exists in this world.

For example, just as how Lily could only return to her normal form during full moon nights, there were magical limits like a specified time, period, season, or the positioning of the stars, only during which an ability could be shown.

It also included using magic items or special catalyst that could not be used again after one use.

Only, the stronger and stricter the limit was, the effect would be proportionately larger. Even if the crossfire was an extremely powerful attack, it was not a large scale magic that would require a certain limit it seems, or so Sylvia believed.

If she were to guess, it was a magic that could be used easily without much labour or effort.

"umu, if you say that it's a completed magic with no specific weakness, then it can't be helped. Attacking from the front will be the best way. Above all, we still have an overwhelming number of troops still remaining. Also, that attack had stopped for some time in between, that means it can't be used infinitely."(norz)

"That would be so. If repeated twice or thrice, the interval should also get bigger. As long as we don't think about our damages, we should be able to overwhelm them with sheer numbers."

They didn't have any definite proof but considering the theory of magic and the situation, it was the most plausible situation. Norz also agreed to it.

"Aa, oh right, what happened to those reinforcements that Bishop Gregorius was sending?"

On the basis of the 'prediction' that was sent a few days earlier, it had been written that some reinforcements were sent this way.

"We have not received any report that such a squad has arrived or is approaching as of yet. As long as it isn't a lie, these reinforcements sure seem to be moving very leisurely."

"fun, I don't care either ways. I don't want to keep a weird squad near me. It'd be better if they didn't come at all."

"Is that so? Either way, no new squad will come here till the next attack at least."

"fuh, the next attack, eh?"

Reacting to those words, Norz gave a smile similar to a carnivorous animal.

"Tomorrow, no, day after tomorrow, the preparations to cross the river will be complete and we shall once again go on the attack. Being delayed for 5 days, we will have bare enough time to catch those demons that those bastards allowed to run away but—"

Norz's smile was mixed with delight to trample those demons, which had made him suffer a loss.

"—fuhaha, this time definitely, I'll exterminate those annoying damned demons."

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The next day, the 5th of Hatsuhi.

That day no mercs came to attack us recklessly like yesterday and the bombardment continued without showing any signs of stopping and the Crusaders themselves showed no movement.

Since some part of the barbed wires and fence had blown away due to the bombardment, we had gone out to repair it.

For some reason, the enemy didn't seem to care about it and except for the bombardment; we were able to smoothly finish the repairs.

Actually, I wanted to blacken our defensive line as well like the guild but Mossan was unable to cast [Eternity] properly on it so the effect of blackening could not be maintained. So I had no choice but to leave it as it is.

At the same time, thanks(?) to the bombardment, the underground supply and escape route prepared beforehand came to good use.

If the soldiers had directly attacked like the first day, there was no need to transfer items underground but if the enemy was bombarding us from a long range, then it was a different matter.

Although it might be impertinent to call it an underground passage as it was nothing more than a well camouflaged trench. But as long as the fireballs didn't fall from directly overhead the passage, it could protect against the flames. On top of which, since it hid the supply squad, there was no chance of getting sniped either.

It would have been fine to carry the items during the night when the bombardment stops but the enemy still kept on observing us, so it was obviously better to use the sure safe underground passage.

But still, even though this bombardment really is annoying, the adventurers in the guild along with Vulcan were surprisingly obedient and calm.

I had resolved myself to plan a surprise attack against the magicians doing the bombardment no matter how reckless it was if their displeasure became unbearable but it ended up being a needless anxiety on my side.

While thinking that, I once again slept for 2 hours and ended my day.

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And on the next morning, after completing their river crossing preparations, the day of attacking finally came.

Alsace defensive battle, its fated conclusion began on the 6th of Hatsuhi.

Kuro No Maou

- Volume 9 -

The 6th of Month of Hatsuhi

Chapter 120 - ReAttack

6th of Hatsuhi.

I woke up at midnight. The bombardment began at dawn and continued till sunset. After that, the fireballs stop raining for that period of time.

On the roof of the guild, while looking at the clear night sky that could not be seen in modern japan, I wait for dawn.

Since nothing happened yesterday, they will definitely come for us today. I estimated that, so when I saw the enormous group of Crusaders at sunrise, I wasn't really surprised.

"Everyone, get to battle positions. Today, the enemy will definitely not fall back and will definitely attack us to defeat us with all their might."

As I felt the presences of the adventurers running around after receiving my orders, I gazed at the long white line of Crusaders that had appeared with sunrise.

Infantry with sharp pointed spears, magicians with long staves with dazzling magic gems embedded in it, heavy armoured knights wrapped in complete armour and the Pegasus Knights that flew in the air composed with the sun behind their backs. Each and every one of them, approached us in a straight line to stab that flag with the emblem of their cross on this land.

Probably today, an immense amount of blood will flow. We might be annihilated if we mess up even slightly. I felt that much pressure from the white army that approached from the horizon.

But we won't retreat, we cannot retreat. That's right, to save as many as I can, to kill as many of those devils as I can, I am here.

"—Let's go."

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Norz moved through the north west highway towards Alsace village with the same amount of vigour as 4 days ago.

“Oi, how’s the situation upstream?”

“Yes! There are no signs of any enemy magician, also there doesn’t seem to be construction there either.”

Listening the report of the scouts that just returned, Norz seemed satisfied.

During the first attack he had fallen into their trap but he won’t allow something like that to happen again.

Only, he had been vigilant of that inundating tactic from the very start and the current report was only one final confirmation.

The weather was clear today. There was no chance of sudden rains that could make the river overflow.

Facing that clear blue sky, only that black box felt as if it still clad in the night and was a symbol of the thorough resistance of the demons.

Even if it was a low level magic, it had remained unscratched even after 4 days of bombardment. Everyone here was already aware of its sturdiness.

But, starting with Norz, every Crusader here believed that today they will definitely remove the existence of that black box from the face of the earth.

“The enemy has no plans, and the preparations for river crossing have been completed.”

On the banks of the Rone river, the magician squad and the heavy armoured knight squad had been spread out.

In the last battle, there were numerous deaths among the magicians deployed on the riverbanks by accurate attacks that blew off their heads.

Being vigilant about that, they had first ensured a safety zone with the help of numerous defensive magics and were smoothly and quickly moving the squad towards the Rone river.

“With this, we can show our full strength.”

Since the bridge had fallen, neither of those squads could cross the river but now a raft floated on the river which could definitely allow them to cross through the river.

The raft was a hastily made one and was not something that was good to look at, but at the very least it had enough capability to cross the river safely.

“Now is the time, we shall show our strength to those damned evil demons!!”

The order of attack resounded.

Here, once again, the curtains rose on the deathly struggle between the Crusaders and the Adventurers.

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As expected, this the time the Crusaders had come with full preparations.

“Even though I knew but still this is unbelievable.....”

Yes, I had already expected this.

But still, the number of rafts prepared was enough to cover the whole shore.

And the ones who rode it were the heavy armoured knights that had not appeared after the first day and the magicians that had been bombarding us till now.

Both of them were squads who could not cross through the river without the bridge. But now that the rafts had been prepared, they could also come over here.

Although I hoped that all of their heavy knights had died during the bridge exploding trap but I guess I was asking for too much as my hopes were clearly betrayed here.

From what I can see, it seems they might have 2 or 3 more heavy knight squads still.

“What are we going to do? Arrows and low level magic isn’t going to work on them.”

Just as Irina said, that armour possesses defensive strength stronger than it looks. And the magician squad had deployed numerous defensive magics which couldn’t be broken through from just long range attacks.

Till now, since the magicians could not cross the river, they could only cover the infantry on half of the river with their defensive magic but if they rode on the rafts, even our protective wall will come inside their effective range.

Considering that they are being protected by god knows how many magic shields, I don’t know how many of them can we kill with our crossfiring.

Conversely speaking, if only we could take care of these two squads, we’ll make through this.

As expected the cavalry troops can’t crossover with just a raft and the Pegasus knights will be held back by Lily, although only for 30 mins.

“For the time being, they seem to be sending their heavy knights and magicians in the front——“

I gave a fleeting glance from atop the guild’s roof.

I can’t see from here, but she’s definitely there.

“——first of all, let’s take down as many as we can.”

Crossing through Lily’s telepathic network, I gave the orders for the first attack.

“Fiona.”

“Yes, what is it, Kurono-san?”

“I’m counting on you to use your strongest one.”

After one beat, the reply came.

“Understood. Everyone, please be careful to not get burnt.”

Chapter 121 - The Golden Sun

Once, I had a teacher in magic.

“Fiona, the power of magic is to be used to protect those people who are precious to you.”

At that time, I remember I replied as such.

“With my power, I still can’t protect sensei I think.”

Meaning, I did not have anyone precious to me other than my sensei.

There’s no way my sensei did not understand the meaning behind it but she laughed and said so.

“Once you leave this place and go to the outside world, you will definitely find people precious enough to you whom you would want to protect.”

Since sensei said that, there was no way that was incorrect.

But, after completing my training as a witch and going to the outside world, even after lots of years, even after attending the [Holy Elysion Magic Academy] where similar magicians gathered, I did not find anyone precious to me.

I wonder if that was my fault.

When is used magic, people shouted ‘Do you want to kill me!?’ , when I spoke they would get angry saying ‘Are you fooling around?’.

I wonder if there was any worth in protecting such people.

I don’t know. I can’t understand what Sensei had said to me.

Everyone would not accept me.

Everyone would keep away from me.

Everyone would try to deceive me, trick me, and sometimes even try to kill me.

That’s why I was always alone, never talking to anyone, never coming into contact with anyone.

But, that's fine, that's how witches are supposed to be.

That's why I left to travel alone, selfishly, in any way where my feet took me, to places with delicious things.

It was on a whim that I came to the Pandora continent. After resigning as a mercenary at Virginia, without returning back to the Republic, I decided to roam through the Pandora continent that I had never seen. It was truly just a simple whim.

At most, my reason was to find delicious things that I had never eaten before.

But, I ended up meeting him.

"What? So you were awake?"

As I woke up from a slightly long nap, there was a black magician young man with a fairy.

"I understand, I'll give you something to eat so at least listen to me."

He gave me a delicious item I had never eaten before.

"Aa, I forgot I hadn't named myself. I am Kurono."

"Lily!" (lily)

And so I ended up meeting Kurono-san and Lily-san.

"I want you to make an official party with us." (lily)

At that time, I had no intention to form a party.

"I know you absolutely suck at controlling your incredible magic but still I'm inviting you."

On Lily-san's words, I was unable to find a reason to reject her and so I became a member of a party after a long time.

But still, I was still anxious and nervous.

Once they see my ridiculous power, or maybe, due to my slightly weird manner of speaking, they would also leave me. Just as how everyone, except my sensei, had done.

But——

“Then I look forward to working with you Fiona-san. I also welcome you.”(kuroono)

“I understand, I’ll believe in you. You’re already my party member after all.”(kuroono)

“Yeah, Fiona’s magic is really amazing. I’m glad you’re a part of my party.”(kuroono)

“Amazing Fiona! We can win against the Crusaders with this! HAHAHAHA!!”(Kuroono)

“It’s fine, it’s the feeling that counts. Then, to deepen the bonds among the members of Element Master, Cheers!!”(kuroono)

Before I noticed, my anxiety and nervousness had already disappeared.

“——Sensei, I have also finally found people I find precious to me.”

After the formation of [Element Master], I always felt comfortable.

Not just Kuroono-san and Lily-san, before I realized, I had become able to open up to other adventurers as well.

As if it was natural, I also became a proper comrade of the Adventurer Alliance led by Kuroono-san.

“That’s why, I will protect those dear to me with my magic.”

In my view were humans similar to me. They were approaching like a swarm.

People of the same land as me, the Syncrea Republic.

Among them there might be people who studied with me during the time I was in the academy.

“But, ‘they’ aren’t what I want to protect.”

Same humans, same homeland, what does it matter?

Heretics, demons, what does it matter?

“What I want to protect is ‘here’.”

As I whispered to myself, inside my head, the voice of the person precious to me resounded.

“Fiona.”(kuroono)

“yes, what is it Kuroono-san?”

Actually, I didn’t even need to hear him to know what he was going to say.

“I’m counting on you to use your strongest one.”

I’m happy.

I am needed here.

They believe in me.

As long as those feelings get through, I can fight, with my life on the line.

“Understood. Everyone, please be careful to not get burnt.”

I swung the memento I received from my Sensei, the [Ainz Broom] and poured magical energy into it.

The type I’m going to use is obviously my strongest forte, fire magic.

Raising the staff, I began the chant.

It was magic, not belonging to the Model magic, it’s a magic technique I came up with. Yes, this my strongest and the only Original magic.

“حرق إن شاء يـمك ذني (Burn me and create)”

Its effect was simple and clear.

“الشرق الزنج فرمن يـ تصاعد (The scarlet that rises from the east.)”

I charge as much fire I can create in a single attack.

“الموت الغرب ية فـ وة (The crimson that sinks in the west.)”

At the tip of the staff, a ball of compressed fire appeared.

“الموت الـ غريب يـة فـوة (The golden blessing that shines over the heavens and the earth.)”

The small ball grew along with the heat inside of it.

“الأ صـلي إـلى الـ خالدة الـ شـعلة (That is the primordial and the eternal flame.)”

No matter how much flames I condense into it, its volume just keeps on increasing.

الـ ذهبي كـ بـير حـريق كـل مـع الـأ بـيض، ضـوء وـعـلى الـ زرقاء، الـ شـعلة مـلـ تـهب، انـ
(Putting that red heat, blue flame, white light, all of it inside the golden fire.)”

Finally, a fireball of around 5m diameter was completed above me.

“ا سـمي فـي الـ شـمس خـلق مـع هـنا، (Here, I create the sun that holds my name.)”

This is, the second sun I created that shines upon everything over the earth.

It's name is—

“——[Golden Sun – Aur Soleil].”

Burn everything, to protect those precious to me.

Chapter 122 - Assault Team Vs Heavy Knights (1)

By the time they realized it, it was already too late.

“Shit! Hurry up and stop it——“

On the roof of the enemy’s fort, nicknamed the black box, a giant fireball appearing could be seen by every Crusader spread out on the shores of Rone river.

It was shining and radiating a golden light brighter than gold itself, but it could only be recognised as a ball of fire.

They obviously understood that that this 5m diameter ball of fire was an attack magic aimed towards them.

They were on the other side of the river, they had no way to stop this attack but they didn’t have the time to run away either. The only choice left was to defend.

“لمنع الحماية نطاق ت و سد يع ناصعة بـ يضاء الجدران [Lux Wall Defen]”

The numerous magician squads were already at the riverside or on the rafts.

After becoming alert from the enemy’s long range attack, they had already deployed defensive magic. They deployed numerous defences to face against this overly large fire ball.

All the heavy knight squad and the magician squad had been covered inside the defensive magics, at that moment, the fireball moved.

Due to the incredible heat it possessed, the air around the fireball was shaking and it looked as if space itself was being distorted by that fireball.

But, its speed as it made a parabola while flying towards them was extremely slow.

“Now’s our chance, shoot it down!!”

One of the magician squads rapidly attacked the approaching fire ball with Ice Sagita.

Ice and cold air became a blizzard as it approached the fireball.

But, each and every one of them was extinguished before they even reached the fireball. Due to the overwhelming heat, the fireball wouldn't stop from being attacked by just 10 or 20 ice magic.

“in, incoming——”

Finally, the fireball dived inside the centre of the squads positioned on the river shore.

With so many magicians, their defences were perfect.

Some of the soldiers who unluckily couldn't be covered with shields might die but the magicians and the heavy knights placed at the centre of the defensive shields would not even get injured, let alone die.

No matter how big it was, it was only one fireball. Yes, the enemy's attack was only mere one attack.

There's no way they wouldn't be able to defend against it. There's no way their shields would be broken through.

But,

“Oh, G, God, please grant us———”

The ball of flames that approached from the sky felt as if the sun itself had fallen down on them.

If the sun was actually falling, then humans could not do anything about it in the first place.

While praying to their God, they finally understood that death was inescapable.

And thus, the [Golden Sun] burned everything there to nothingness.

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“Wh, what the hell is that!?!?”

After the light and blast waves had subsided, Norz finally became aware of the scene in front of him.

The scenery near the riverside had changed in a matter of seconds.

The cornerstone of this occupation army, the heavy knight squads and the magician squads, and numerous soldiers were supposed to be positioned over there. But there was not even a shadow remaining there.

The change didn't stop with just the disappearance of the squads. The terrain itself had been changed.

A crater had been created over there as a proof of the destruction that had just occurred.

The water that supposed to be flowing there had completely disappeared and now finally water flowed in with surging waves from upstream to cover the area without water once again as if the river had forgotten to flow for some time.

Soon, the flow of the river calmed down once again, but, the disappeared soldiers didn't come back. There was no way they could have.

“What's going on? With just one attack, something like this——”

The troops had already experienced the nightmare of losing one whole squad instantly once.

But this time, they had lost much more troops at the same place. Norz could not have predicted this.

No matter how strong their opponents were, after all they were nothing more than some few demons holding up inside one rural village. They, who were not even a part of an army, should not have possessed a first class magician squad or an Ancient Weapon either.

Nevertheless, for such a high level annihilating attack to be fired on them; not just Norz, no soldier could have predicted that.

“Please, calm down a bit first.”

A cool voice struck Norz's mind that was in chaos.

“Sister Sylvia.....why are you here?”

"I'm the vice commander after all, it's not weird for me to come to the front lines right? Rather than that, you should quickly give new orders or you'll be unable to cope with it."

"umu.....yes, it is as you say."

Shaking his head, Norz forcibly calmed himself down.

He wasn't the only one who was shocked by what they saw, the troops were the same. If he didn't give orders quickly, they would be unable to take the offensive once more.

"Quickly retrieve the injured! That fireball was probably the enemy's trump card, they wouldn't be able to use it consecutively!!"

On his orders, the soldiers who were dumbfounded began to move in a panic once again.

"Deploy a new squad! We have taken severe damage but we haven't been annihilated! The attack will continue as planned! Make preparations for the magicians and the Heavy Knights to cross the river!"

"YES!!"

After he saw the soldiers who had taken orders scatter in different directions, Norz finally recovered his composure as well.

"Damned demons, don't think we would fall back from something like that!"

"Yes, if we fall back now then we'll be doing exactly what they want. Since they didn't use this attack the last time, this attack must have been their trump card as you had said." (Sylvia)

"Aa, we still have more than enough troops to attack them. If we according to the plan, there will be no change to the fact that we'll capture Alsace."

Just like last time, they had taken a severe blow at the beginning but it was still not enough to change the course of battle.

The Crusaders still had a great amount of infantry, magicians, heavy knights, Pegasus Knights, Cavalry etc. to easily complete their task.

Although, this battle had already become a humiliation for Norz which he'd never forget.

“.....but, I will not tolerate a loss. Definitely, I’ll stab our God’s great flag on that annoying black box.”

Norz who was burning with anger inside, gave orders for attack as soon as the preparations were done.

No matter how many casualties may arise due to the demons’ resistance, today he will definitely not retreat. He will win today, he swore to his God.

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“Is everyone alright?”

I had already estimated that Fiona’s [Golden Sun – Aur Soleil]’s aftermath would reach even our protective wall so we had already deployed numerous defensive magics with a wide range beforehand.

Soon reply’s indicating their well being came back to me.

And looking through the surroundings, there doesn’t seem to be anyone that’s injured either. It seems, we were able to keep through it perfectly.

“Amazing.....the enemy squad that had been there till now has completely disappeared.”

I completely agree with Irina’s comment.

I had seen it before already, but still I was surprised once again.

“Yeah, it destroyed through shields and armour as if they didn’t even exist.”(kurono)

The magicians and the heavy knights that were approaching here with rafts just a few seconds back have completely disappeared.

It did fall directly in the middle of the enemy group after all, I don’t even need to know what happened at the centre of the explosion.

“But, it seems the enemy is still eager to attack.”

Once again, the soldiers started coming to the river side.

And maybe because they were cautious of getting sniped, defensive magics have been deployed as well as they floated the rafts to cross the river.

“So it’s a war of attrition from her onwards, right?” (irina)

“Yes.” (kuroono)

The enemy still hasn’t lost all their magicians and heavy knights.

We had decreased quite a lot of their numbers but still they have enough numbers to defeat us.

“Today will be the biggest turning point.” (kuroono)

“yes, let’s work hard.” (irina)

My heart calmed a bit as I saw Irina smile.

Ah, I calmed down, meaning, I really must have been nervous till now.

But it can’t be helped. After all, today a lot of lives will be lost and I knew that.

But,

“That’s right, we need to work hard—-“

Mine and everyone else have already hardened their resolves.

“—-are preparations over?”

As I looked back, The assault team had already gathered with Vulcan at its head.

“Yeah, we are all ready.”

The ones we are going to face off now are the enemies with the strongest defence, the heavy Knights.

They were also elites like the Pegasus Knights that had splendid equipment.

We can’t stop them like we did with the infantry soldiers. Since they have high level of defence, our crossfire won’t be able to deal with them.

Thus, the best way to kill them would be to attack them personally and cut them apart.

“.....Lily, Fiona, can you hear me?”

“Un!”

“yes.”

Using telepathy, I connected with those two.

“Fiona, you did well, leave the rest to us and take a good rest.”

“I’m glad I was of use.”

She must be currently being transported to one of the beds in the guild.

It’ll take some time for her to get up even with the use of magical energy restoring potions.

“Lily, if the Pegasus Knights come, I’ll be counting on you again. But please don’t be reckless and return back before your ‘Divine Protection’ runs out.”

“Un, I’ll be fine!”

“Alright, then, I’ll go on ahead.”

“Yes, take care, Kurono-san.”(Fiona)

“Take care!”(lily)

After getting the boost from their voices, I was already standing near the front gate.

In my right hand was the [Cursed hatchet Hararetsu] and in my left was [Black Ballista replica]. And inside my shadow were countless blackened swords hidden.

“Let’s go!”

As I shouted, I jumped outside the front gate with the assault team.

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Arrows, lightning, fire, ice, rained upon the Crusaders who were crossing the river.

But it didn't reach the heavy knights who were on the rafts.

Only those highly skilled warriors who had mastered magic as well as martial arts were allowed to wear this Full Plate Mail armour.

There was no way, a long range attack of that level would be able to injure them.

"Looks like it was true that that giant explosion was the demons' trump card."

"Yeah, those guys from the second squad were really unlucky. There's no way anything could live after getting hit by that."

"Let's take revenge for them and at the same time, the glory they were supposed to have as well."

Since they believed that the demons had run out of tricks, they were fairly composed.

"Look, those demons have come out themselves."

In the direction one of the knights pointed, with a black robed man in the front, there was group of various races with differing equipment.

Even if they were of a different race, they could easily infer that those demons were adventurers.

But, that group of adventurers had been able to keep the soldiers in check on the first day, that too without getting any casualties. They were a truly skilled group.

Each and every heavy Knight here knew that this time the adventurers target was them.

"Say, isn't that man in the black clothes in the front, the rumoured 'Devil'?"

“yeah, no doubt about it. There is only that skeleton in black clothes on the front lines other than him or so everyone said. Since a human’s wearing that, no doubt that he’s that bastard Devil.”

“hehe, so let’s go ‘exorcise’ that Devil.”

Since he was wearing a helmet, his face couldn’t be seen but no doubt he was currently smiling.

“Alright, get down from the rafts! Take formation, we’ll scatter the enemies in a single attack!”

As per the orders of the squad commander of the 3rd heavy knight squad, the heavy knights jumped down from the rafts into the shallow areas of the river.

Even with the river’s flow, the heavy knights perfectly took their formation and prepared themselves to attack the approach demons.

“Let’s go! We’ll kill the evil demons and raise the honour of the knights!!”

Raising their halberds, the heavy knight squad, covered in full plate armour and protected by tower shields, raised their war cry and took their first step in order to trample over the Alsace’s defensive line.

Chapter 123 - Assault Team Vs Heavy Knights Squad (2)

That was truly a wall of silvery shining steel.

The heavy knights holding their tower shields, as they approached in a single horizontal line formation, were truly giving off an incredible amount of pressure and intimidation.

“Let’s take the first action, Magic Bullet Arts—-“

The [loaded] bullets appeared around me and the target of these pseudo full metal jacket bullets was of course, the wall of silver.

Now, let’s test which one is stronger? My bullets or your prided full plate armour.

“—release all bullets – Full Burst!”

As I swung the [Black Ballista Replica], with black muzzle flashes in mid-air, rushed towards the approaching enemies.

“Iron Guard.”

The heavy knights that quickly sensed my attacks activated defensive martial art skills.

Before the bullets could reach, the already hard and strong armour became even sturdier due to the magical energy released as an effect of the martial art skill.

Unlike the shield, its effects last only a few seconds but if such a defensive skill could be activated in such a short time then they wouldn’t have much trouble in defending against most of the attacks.

“To remain uninjured—-Magic Sword Arts.”

The thousand bullets I fired were defended against by their Tower shield.

Although sparks and the sound of metal clashing rose as the bullets struck the shield, there was barely any scratch on them.

Since the bullets had no effect, next I brought out my blackened long swords.

The 10 swords that appeared from my [Shadow Gate] were deployed around me as per my orders.

“It’ll be bad if I’m unable to deal any damage even with these——Pierce through!!”

Rather than materializing items from scratch, it was more effective to enchant existing items through magic.

Even Sarel had to use her own hands to stop my Sword Arts, that’s the proof that it would have been that dangerous to take it head on.

Then, it should have some effect even against these heavy knights with MAX defence.

As per my will, the blackened swords flew like hawks aiming for their prey.

“It works.”

The clash was over in an instant.

The heavy knight in front of me fell and sunk into the river.

Each and every sword took different trajectories and aimed for 1 knight. Even if their shields are strong, that doesn’t mean that their defence is the same from 360 degrees. It was impossible to perfectly protect everything.

And my magic swords cleanly pierced through the helm and pierced through his brain.

“But, the amount of consumption is really high.....”

Unless I use 10 swords at the same time, it was impossible to take down even a single heavy knight.

Even the fallen heavy knight had been able to deflect all other 9 swords, except the one that struck his head, with his shield or halberd or even his armour.

The sword that struck his armour had been able to leave damage but it had been unable to pierce through in a single attack.

I guess it's a relief that at least the armour is weaker than the shield, if only slightly.

"In any case, it doesn't change the fact that this is going to be a difficult battle."

Even with the [Kuronagi] of the cursed hatchet in my right hand, I don't think I'll be able to cut them into two easily.

The magic bullets of my baton; if I were to boost its hardness rather than the number of bullets, 3 bullets should be able to pierce through the weakened portion of the armour if I hit with perfect accuracy.

And behind me, once again, 10 blackened swords appeared from within my shadow. I still have quite a lot of stock of blackened swords left with me but I can't be reckless with their use.

Among the 10 swords I used, half of them were chipped when they struck their strong guard and the blackening affect was removed.

If the black magical energy covering the sword got dispelled, obviously I lose control over those swords. And in such a situation, it'll be quite difficult to pick them up and enchant them once again.

"It's a formidable enemy, but——"

The heavy knight squad covered the gap created by me in their formation quickly without getting flustered and kept on advancing with the same pace.

Soon, we'll be in a distance where we can clash our blades with them. After that it'll come down to a close combat battle between us, assault team and the heavy knights.

"Bring it on! Don't move back even a single step! Let's show these scrap iron knights the will of us adventurers!!"

Chapter 124 - Fairy Vs Pegasus Knights (4)

(Lily POV)

“—they’re here.”

There are enemy presences in the air. If one were to say that, they could only be talking about the Pegasus Knights.

This time they arrived even faster than last time, just as Kurono had said. They really are going all out this time.

“Disconnecting Telepathy. After that, please use analog comm., alright?”

After informing the adventurers instead of Kurono who was busy fighting on the front lines, I quickly opened the windows and flew to the skies.

My body is already in my normal form, condition is also not bad either. Although the sound from bombardment was really annoying but in my child form I was still able to sleep well.

“Hurry up and come here, I have a time limit after all.”

As I soared above Alsace Village, I saw the Pegasus Knights flying towards here in a formation.

They are clearly on guard against me. I guess I won’t be able to surprise attack them with [Meteor Strike] like last time.

Last time, maybe I should have showed myself as a bit more weaker to make them drop their guards at least a bit.

I had been able to take the initiative with the surprise attack, and I was also able to see through their plans with my powerful Extra magic telepathy.

But, although I had maintained a superior position in the last battle till the end, in reality, I was also at my limit.

In the first place, I’m not even a dragon. Why am I supposed to fight so many of them together?

Since I’m fighting for Kurono, the only reason I didn’t yield even with the gap in our overwhelming war potential is all thanks to the power of Love.

Seriously, what will I do if my precious body got injured?

“—nn?”

As they came closer and closer, and when they were about to enter the range of my telepathy, I felt an uncomfortable feeling.

Yeah, this feeling, no doubt, this is,

“Mind Protect? So they took a protective measure, how impudent.”

I can't see inside their hearts, a thin wall, no, a mist like barrier is preventing me from seeing their thoughts clearly.

Mind Protect was only a low level mind protection magic but it seems I won't be able to read through the whole squad like last time.

I can break through just their Protect but, doing so while under heavy fire and while attacking and dodging at the same time, it is difficult to spare even a shred of my concentration.

“Well alright, as long as I can just see through any special tricks, I'll just fight them head-on like last time.”

I'll soon be inside their attack range; I put up my Oracle Field.

If I don't have any scope of using a surprise attack, I'll just attack them from the front.

“Now, I'll kill all of you and get praised by Kurono, so quickly die for me!!”

We both attacked at the same time.

Lightning, wind, flames, ice—a diverse range of elemental attacks were fired towards me.

I also fired beams and balls of light. Its size was the same as Light Sagita but its power is at intermediate level.

The high level tracking ability of the light balls interrupted the attacks that blocked my path of flight as I closed on into them.

The light beams that can only move straight forward, aimed for the Pegasus Knights at high speed.

Even though fast, the enemy is also an elite squad and can evade these beams by predicting its path.

As my attacks approached the knights, they quickly disp—did not evade.

“Eh, they turned back!?”

I thought they would scatter and move to surround me but my prediction was overturned.

I wonder what they were thinking as they turned 180 degrees even with an enemy like me in front of them and started returning back.

“Wait, wait a minute!!”

As I tried to find out their intentions, they were barely inside the range of my telepathy so I couldn’t interfere strongly enough to break through their mind protect.

For the time being I should get closer to them to attack as well as to read their minds, so I started to chase after the running Pegasus knights.

But, in a straight line, they were slightly faster and they were slowly getting further apart. I raised my flying speed to pursue them but, no, I can’t catch up.

“Tch, anymore and I’ll be chasing them too far.”

I lowered my speed and stopped in mid-air.

It’d be too dangerous to go too far away from Alsace.

In the first place, luring an enemy like me then trapping them was a very basic tactic.

If that was what the enemy is aiming for, then I have no reason to go along with it.

As I thought of returning back, the next moment, the Pegasus Knights once again turned back.

Once again they approached me as they fired a volley of magic attacks.

“I don’t want to move any further than this, no choice but to move backwards.”

A volley fired from barely within their range was easy to dodge as well as to intercept.

I began to retreat and move backwards while still facing them.

As I did, the Pegasus Knights maintained the same distance as they flew this way.

And every time I entered their range, they would start firing magic attacks towards me.

“Kuh, could it be——”

I stopped in mid air. The Pegasus Knights also stopped in mid air.

If I advanced, they would retreat.

And if I retreat, they would advance, while maintaining the same distance. And the attacks were nothing more than a way to try and harass me.

“——they’re trying to buy time!”

I understood their intentions.

Even without reading their minds, if they move this obviously, only a fool would not be able to understand that.

Basically, the enemy was trying to make me exhaust the ‘time limit’ of my DP.

“Really, doing such impudent things.....”

Chapter 125 - Firefight

Today, Simon was not on the rooftop but was currently encamped on the window of one of the rooms on the fourth floor with his [Yatagarasu].

From this room, from the Rone river till the Alsace's main gate, everything could be perfectly seen and was the second best point for sniping after the roof.

In today's attack, the magicians were also crossing the river so there was no bombardment on the roof but it wouldn't be strange if some other kind of attack magic was rained upon him if he stayed at the roof.

A trained archer or magician could easily deal with 1 or 2 attacks of low level magic that came from above.

But, Simon was a weak elf in the first place and also had an inferior constitution. On top of that, he didn't possess the high magical energy skills that normal Elves have either.

On the roof, he would have been in a far too big danger.

Thus, after considering his safety as well as a position suitable for sniping, this room had been allotted to him.

But even though this was supposedly a safe place, the Crusaders had far too many magicians and they were attacking this small window, where Simon was, as well.

"Uahh, hot hot!?!"

The approaching Ignis Sagita hit close to the window and spread out flames.

Unluckily, his hand got hit by some of the flames and he felt a burning pain.

"Uu.....Kuh....."

He left the gun and hid himself inside the room for the time being.

The guild that had been blackened by Kurono, even though it was made of wood, was not shaking at all even under the constant attack of the magicians.

Simon had no worry of a magic piercing through the walls and hitting him and looked for an item to heal his hand inside the pouch that had been enchanted with Dimension magic.

A pouch like that, that could hold more than its looks, was something usually held by rank 3 or above adventurers.

The only reason Simon, a rank 1, had this is because he had been give this as a farewell gift to him a long time ago. From that, Simon brought out a small sack.

“What do I do? This is my last [Fairy’s Miracle drug]....”

As he sprinkled the sparkling powder on his burnt hand, the pain instantly disappeared and his skin returned back to its original soft and clean skin, as if time itself had been turned backwards.

The [Fairy’s Miracle Drug] that possessed incredible regenerative ability was an extremely important magic item for Simon who was not a sturdy adventurer.

But if he got injured again, he doesn’t even have any normal potions remaining now.

There was difference between a normal potion and the fairy’s miracle drug that was like the heavens and the earth.

Just how much affect will the pain remaining on his arm have on his accuracy; the fact made Simon anxious.

“.....But, I have no choice but to do this. Everyone else is still fighting as well.”

Seeing the numerous enemies spread below him, he suppressed all of his negative emotions like anxiousness and fear, and once again picked up his gun.

“That’s why, I’ll work hard as well—and shoot the enemies down!”

As he took a stance with the [Yatagarasu], in front of him one of the magicians exhausted his shield with good timing for Simon.

He pulled the trigger without hesitation and took another life of the enemy.

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“Kuh, What’s going on? Why isn’t that black box falling down already!?!”

Seeing another subordinate of his fall down as blood flowed from his chest, the squad commander of the 5th magician squad shouted.

Disembarking from the raft, the magician squad that had spread out in the shallow areas of the river were firing vigorously on the black box of the Alsace village but let alone getting burned down, the building wasn’t even taking a scratch.

“Commander, for the time being let’s focus on defence and wait for the arrival of the 6th and 7th squads!”

“Guess there’s no other choice. Change to dual shield defences—”

The guild protected by black walls was firing on them from above but they, the magicians, had no cover since they stood at the river. So, they had no choice but to completely depend on their defensive magics.

And even that defensive magic wasn’t omnipotent.

It required quite a lot of magical energy to be activated and it was pretty difficult to cover the whole squad especially in such a condition where they were spread out.

In the first place, if defensive magic had been that perfect, there would have been no use for castles and walls after all.

Against opponents that were hiding inside a structure like the black box that possessed a solid defence, even if they had more numbers, it was not an easy job to attack it from the front and make it fall.

“Seriously, those blockheaded heavy knights. Just how much time do they need to take to care of those demons and break through the front gate!?”

As per the plan as well, the magicians were not meant to take down the guild by themselves. They were only meant to support the infantry and the heavy knights as they broke through the front.

Thus they were firing towards the enemy archers and magicians in the guild to prevent them from attacking the soldiers.

Although, with just their attack magic they had actually thought they could destroy the guild which is why the commander was getting irritated when he failed to do so.

And on top of that, their allies' attack wasn't going too well either. They were getting delayed from their actual plan.

Although they didn't doubt their victory, they couldn't stay calm within either.

"In a little more time, soon the soldiers and the heavy knights will break through that flimsy protective wall. As expected we shouldn't be too unreasonable and just support them as planned for now."

"umu, it is as you say. To lose your life in such a skirmish would be——"

At that moment, a black bullet attacked the commander's head.

"Co, commander!?!"

Piercing through the forehead, it made a big hole from behind the head from which blood and gore spewed out. It didn't leave any scope to even try to heal him.

"Kuh, aim for that window! Don't let the bastard hiding there shoot anymore!!"

Seeing the threat of the enemy sniper, that could accurately aim through the slight gap inside the shield, and locating his position, the vice commander gave orders now that the commander had died.

"Our damages are too great. Hurry up and break through that protective wall....."

Chapter 126 - In Front of the Protective Wall

In front of the Alsace protective wall covered with barbed wires, the machinegun was raising a loud firing sound as it mowed down the soldiers trying to push through.

This overwhelming scene was the same as the first day, is what they wanted to say but,

“Ah, this is bad, it won’t hold on much longer like this!” (Mozrun)

The situation was slowly, but definitely turning to the worse.

“Stop complaining Mossan! Ah look, the enemies are coming from there!!”

Quickly turning the barrel of the machinegun, he showered bullets towards the Crusaders who were jumping over the corpses of their comrades and continued advancing.

Kurono had led the assault team to defeat the heavy knights so obviously he was not here to use crossfire.

With just one machinegun, as expected, gaps would be created due to which the soldiers were able to approach much closer.

“This is too difficult! Today the enemies have come with lots of magicians, the soldiers with shield magics are too damn hard!!” (Mossan)

While creating dark muzzle flashes, the black bullets were being fired like a storm but it was still taking a lot of time to pulverize the soldiers who now had the support of the magicians.

And in that time, the enemies would approach even closer.

“Uoh!? That was close——”

An [Ignis Sagita] flew towards Mozrun from the magician squad that was supporting the infantry soldiers.

The fire arrow was on course to a direct hit but,

“الرياح لم يمنع درع” [Air Shield]

Hanna of the [Three Hunting Princesses] instantly deployed a defensive shield and blocked the arrow of flames.

“Thanks for the help little girl!”(mossan)

“Don’t call me a little girl!”(hanna)

“Gahahahaha. From my perspective every woman is a little girl!”

While cracking jokes, Mozrun continued using the machinegun.

The soldiers advance had yet to lose its vigour.

(“But, seriously it’ll be bad if it goes on like this…….”)(Mossan)

As Mozrun gave a fleeting glance to another direction, he saw numerous magicians and soldiers with bows in every direction.

Sometimes, a log like arrow would be fired from the ballista that would destroy a part of the enemy force but in front of such an overwhelming amount of troops, the number that was killed was not even worth mentioning.

It was clear that they lacked the firepower to repel the enemies.

Since the enemy magicians were continuously firing towards the sturdy guild, they (adventurers) could not hope for support and covering fire from the guild either.

Although, thanks to that, most of the enemy magicians were not attacking in front of the protective wall either.

Even the heavy knight squad was kept in check thanks to the high levelled adventurers led by Kurono.

But still, it still doesn’t change the fact that most of the enemies were attacking this protective wall.

Just like the first attack, the infantry soldiers kept on attacking, and to top it off, since the magicians had also crossed the river, they were helping the soldiers with shield and boost magic as well.

Even now when the machinegun kept on firing, they were still letting the enemy come close which was not a very good situation. And probably, Mozrun wasn't the only one who thought that.

Everyone in front of the protective wall was thinking the same thing. When the machinegun becomes unable to continue attacking, they would not even last 10mins.

("If boss could take down the heavy knight squad and return, we could still make it through. But, he was not able to do so, we'll have no choice but to retreat.....")

He still had quite a lot of replacement gun barrels but it won't be long before he runs out of them as well.

But still, right now, Mozrun suppressed his anxiety and kept on firing the machinegun and creating death for the enemies.

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The commander of the magician squad supporting the infantry soldiers' attack calmly looked at the ongoing battle.

"Our casualties are great but we'll break through soon enough."

"So it seems."

While looking at the 5th magician squad, that was continuing the attack on the black box, with eyes of pity, he rejoiced at his good luck on getting a job that had him in a safe place while supporting the advance of the soldiers.

"The heavy knight squad seems to be having more trouble than expected but—"

The 3rd heavy knight squad that had crossed the river first was already trapped in a battle royale with the demon's squad.

Since they were all fighting scattered and jumbled, the magicians might accidentally hit their own soldiers like that so the magicians had no choice but to leave those demons completely to the heavy knights.

“—After the 4th heavy knight squad also crosses the river, the outcome will be decided.”

“Before that, there’s a chance that that devil’s attack might stop as well.”

“Aa, right, there was that report as well.”

In front of him was the scene where the evil skeleton was instantly killing the soldiers with a threatening attack while releasing black flashes.

But it had already been proved in the last battle that there was a certain interval created after some time.

When this rapid fire black magic, that was able to hold back even such an overwhelming amount of soldier, stopped, even a uneducated soldier could tell what would happen after that.

“fufu, it’s only a matter of time before this devil’s village also falls.”



Chapter 127 - Assault Team Vs Heavy Knight Squad (3)

A few meters in front of the Alsace's main gate, on the shores of the river, currently the fiercest battle was taking place.

“Gooooaaah!!!”

An Orc warrior easily swung around a heavy Great Sword as he slashed around.

“Kuh, Guard!!”

The facing heavy knight blocked the attack with his shield and pushed out to repel the attack.

Although it was Orc who possess superhuman strength, if a trained heavy knight pushed along with a martial art, even an Orc would end up stumbling.

“Charge!!”

Seeing the stumbling arc, he released the martial skill that increased the thrusting power of the halberd, [Charge] and pursued him.

But the enemy wasn't weak either. Even while in a collapsing posture, he swung his great sword with one hand and endured the charging spearhead.

The Orc who blocked the attack took back a few steps and once again increased the distance between the two.

“haa.....haa.....damned demons, to think they would be this strong....”

The commander of the 3rd heavy knight squad involuntarily muttered so.

When he saw around just 20 demons jump out from the main gate, he thought of it as a great chance.

They were the best warriors among the demons that were protecting the village of Alsace. If he could take them down the rest of the attack would be easy, above all he had the confidence to do that as well.

But still, after they actually crossed swords with them, this was the result.

Due to the overwhelming strength of the demons, their line formation was soon disrupted and it turned into a chaotic melee battle.

Even though the heavy knights had the superiority in numbers, the heavy knights with the so-called invulnerable defence were falling one by one.

Due to the unexpected strength of the demons, his commands and orders were also not taking much effect. And the demons only gained more and more vigour as they kept on attacking while raising bone chilling roars.

Even those demons had fallen victim to their halberds as well, and their numbers had fallen to 2/3rds of what they were.

And even among those less than 20 demons remaining there was barely anyone that was still unhurt and were drenched in their own blood as well the blood of their opponents and had become completely clad in crimson.

But even then, without losing their fighting spirit the fact that those demons kept on fighting without any fear was a scene that made even these veteran heavy knights feel fear.

It could be, that they might be pushed back in the end as well.

“Impossible, there’s no way we would lose—-[Break].”

Warding off the attack of the Orc brilliantly once again, he sliced with the axe part of the halberd as a counter.

The martial art [Break] that had the effect of increasing the slashing power this time caught the body of the Orc and tore through the leather armour and steel like skin together and delivered a fatal blow.

“Goah, gufuuuu.....”

Fresh blood spewed out from the wound and finally the Orc’s giant body fell down as foam and blood appeared in his mouth.

This was the second demon he had killed.

Even though he was the commander, he had still been able to kill only 2 of them.

In his sights, he saw a werewolf of more than 2m in height crushing and smashing one of his subordinates along with the armour with his giant sword.

“Shit, if it goes on like this——“

“Don’t look away during battle, you scrap iron piece of junk knight.”

As a voice came with incredible bloodlust, the only reason he was able to react this fast was thanks to his high level of skill.

“Iron Guard!!”

“Kuronagi!!”

The black blade flashed. Unable to block the power of the blade infused with the martial art skill, he ended up stepping backwards involuntarily.

But his posture didn’t crumble, if he showed an opening here, he would definitely die in the next attack. That’s the kind of opponent the ‘Devil’ attacking him was. He had finally understood that fact.

“Haaaaaa!!”

As a reflex he swung his halberd——he met with a resistance.

He was able to somehow deflect the 2 long swords that came flying towards him.

As he took a stance with his shield to prepare for the next attack, the opponent also stepped back a little.

“A ‘Devil’ eh.....this man is too dangerous. I need to bring him down right now.”

He focused on the black clothed man standing in front of me who was called the ‘Devil’.

Defeating the Kievan’s squad at Irz village, defending Alsace in the previous battle with black magic, and the man who had created numerous corpses at the river shore right now was truly a man befitting of the title of the ‘Devil’ for the Crusaders.

He once again realized that now that he was directly facing him.

The man with black hair and black eyes and an extremely fearsome look; his black robe was now completely drenched in red blood of his enemies and his own blood as well.

But his fighting spirit was the same as the other demons, no, he had the most fighting spirit right now and as if he was also using the same to lead the demons as well.

He realized that the dark night-like pair of eyes that were glaring were clearly filled with hatred.

“.....En garde!”

Suppressing his fear with the his will of steel, he rushed forward to kill that man.

Each and every attack of this Devil were fearsome but he could definitely block them with his shield, he judged that after exchanging blows with him till now.

Even that ominous looking hatchet’s martial art was unable to cut apart his tower shield and had stopped at just scratching the surface.

(“I’ll close in to him and first block his attack with my [Guard] and after he loses balance, I’ll finish it with either [Charge] or [Break].”)

While abiding by the basics of the fighting styles used by the heavy knights, he began his attack.

He clearly had enough defensive ability to stop the enemy’s attack, and furthermore he also possessed attacking power to kill him in a single blow as well which is why he didn’t need to use any tricks.

It was a basic tactic but it had no openings and was a perfectly completed tactic.

“Uooooohh!!”

“Magic Bullet arts.”

The ‘Devil’ fired the black bullets, that had become a fear for the soldiers, towards the his shield.

“Something like this won’t stop me!!”

A quite strong recoil ran through his arm but it was not enough to stop his attack.

Without getting deterred at all, he kept on rushing forward.

“—Kuronagi.”

“[Guard]!”

Both used the same skills again but this time it was the other martial art user who stumbled.

As if he had run into a giant stone, his Kuronagi was unable to cut through the Tower Shield and,

“guh—-“

The Devil lost his balance.

A clear opening was created, and the knight was not naïve enough to let it pass, otherwise he would have never become the commander of a squad.

“You’re mine!!”

He swung the Halberd, and released the martial art that could cut away even rocks, [Break].

“—I told you didn’t I, to not look away?”

As the Devil laughed while saying that, he simply needed to swing his halberd over him and end it.

But, his hand didn’t move, no, he felt his whole body losing strength.

“Walking in darkness, dancing in the night, the one swing sword—-[Shadow Walker Hanzoma]”

Someone’s voice came to his ears.

Someone was sitting on his shoulder, and that someone was stabbing a blade inside his neck.

He didn’t know what had happened but the ‘Devil’ in front of him could clearly see it.

A single woman had approached while using her Divine Protection's ability to its utmost to hide her presence. That woman had climbed on the knight's shoulder and had deeply thrust in a Dagger Knife from the gaps in his armour into his neck.

"kuaha——"

But in the knight's eyes, he could only see a fatal amount of blood spewing from his neck and the Devil in front of him laughing.

He was unable to see the figure of the person who had killed him till the very end.



Chapter 128 - The 4 Battlefields

“Thanks for the help, Su-san.”

“Don’t mention it. If you hadn’t pulled all of his attention towards yourself, I wouldn’t have been able to aim for him either.”

After saying just that, Su-san disappeared as if melting into the background of the battlefield.

Amazing, I looked away just a little and I couldn’t see her anymore.

“But this is bad, if it goes on like this we’ll be more or less annihilated like this.”

We had brought down the heavy knight who was probably the commander but there won’t be much effect on the battle just due to loss of commands.

If we fight so jumbled like this, they wouldn’t be able to retreat either.

“ouch, ouch, just how long has it been since I got so hurt.....”

For the being, I should focus on healing myself rather than the progress of the battle.

I came here recklessly fighting with heavy knights at close range even though I’m not even a warrior but I also got enough injuries, proportionate to that as well.

A light attack from a blade could be blocked by my [Baphomet’s Embrace] but, as expected, if I get hit by a martial art, it can only reduce some of the damage at most.

Whenever I get injured I used my only healing magic(?) [Flesh compensation] to stop the wounds with the jelly like black magical energy and limited the blood loss to the minimum and continued fighting.

But, it can’t be helped that it became like this. I knew this’ll happen after all. I also had a way to fight them, that’s why I had rushed in like this.

I am talking about Lily’s speciality, [Fairy’s miracle drug].

When I thought and realized that I could treat most of my wounds instantly with this, I decided to rush in the battle as well.

“Now that I think about it, this is the first time I’m using it. I wonder how good it is—”

I brought out a small sack. Unlike the potions, this was in powdered form.

Quickly, I removed the seal and opened the sack. Inside, a sparkling powder that looked like sugar was kept. The light being released was very similar to the white light that usually wraps around Lily’s naked body.

But I don’t have the time to slowly observe it. Quickly putting the powder on my palm, I applied it directly to my wounds.

“Uohh, this is amazing! The pain is completely disappearing!”

Its effect was as I had said. The moment it touched my body, the pain completely disappeared.

The Flesh Compensation made by black magical energy also completed its healing effect and the wounds completely regenerated.

On top of it, I even felt my fatigue disappearing as well.

“This is certainly an all-cure medicine. Thanks Lily.”

(“—You’re welcome, I’m happy that you liked it.”)

Suddenly a voice resounded inside my head. There’s no way I would have hallucinated it. This voice certainly belonged to Lily who was currently fighting with the Pegasus Knights in mid air.

“To have communicated with me directly, did something happen?”

The communication was supposed to be stopped during the battle, I suddenly had a bad premonition but,

(“The situation’s turning a little bad.”)

It seems I was correct.

“What happened?”

("It seems that the Pegasus Knights have become aware of my Divine Protection's time limit and are wasting time by not attacking. Right now, I have no other option to just keep on glaring against each other till my Divine Protection runs out.")

".....I see."

Depending on how you think, although stopping the enemy while the DP lasts was also a merit but the fact that she was not able to exhaust her opponents at all was really a bad situation.

"How long will your DP last?"

("The [Queen Beryl] won't last even 10 mins. I also only have 2 more scrolls remaining. If I were to activate my DP using that, I'll have around 40mins.")

"Basically, you're saying that a completely unhurt Pegasus Knight squad will attack within an hour?"

("Un.")

"I got it. It can't be helped. Just hold them out till that time lasts."

("Got it, but, are you fine over there?")

"Although it's a bit unreasonable and impossible, if we don't do anything, Alsace village won't last."

("I see.....then Kurono, don't be too reckless.")

"I can't really promise that but, yeah, I'll try not to."

And so the communication with Lily also ended.

"This really is turning worse by the second....."

The current Alsace defensive battle is divided in four major battles.

The first is between us, assault team and the heavy knight squad.

The second is the glaring battle between Lily and the Pegasus Knights in the air.

The third is the firefight between the magicians and Simon and the others at the guild.

And the fourth is in front of the protective wall, between Mossan and his machinegun against the attacking soldiers.

These 4 battles are, even though there's an overwhelming difference in our numbers, somehow still miraculously holding out.

All this is thanks to Lily in mid air, the blackened guild that remains unaffected even when getting hit by lower and intermediate attack magic, the machinegun that is one-sidedly killing the enemies, and last but not the least, the dire efforts made by every adventurer to keep on fighting.

But all that is only temporary. If we give even a single opening, they will quickly cut through. And this could happen in any of the ongoing battles.

No, going by the flow, Alsace will definitely fall today.

"And only we can do something to reverse that."

If we could at least completely crush our opponents, the heavy knights, our chances of prevailing would rise.

We could strike the magicians squad, or go back to the protective wall to strengthen our defences. Especially if I could go back to resume our crossfiring, we could be able to instantly turn back the attacking soldiers.

To get through today, we need to defeat the heavy knights no matter what.

If we can't, we'll have no other choice but to be drowned by the overwhelming amounts of enemy forces and lose.

"I think we have killed quite a lot of heavy knights but——"

As I looked towards the river, I saw another squad of the same armoured knights embarking on the raft and crossing to this side.

"One more squad left....."

I exhaled involuntarily.

We had drove these heavy knights to annihilation after a lot of sacrifices.

But nevertheless, the enemy, as if it was only obvious, is sending out another squad.

Our numbers have already lessened, and including me almost every member of the assault team is injured.

Finally the heaviness of the word ‘annihilation’ was starting to bear down on me.

“But, no choice but to do it——-Hm?”

The moment I was about to once again charge towards the heavy knights, the telepathy crystal inside my bag started shining to tell me that a message was being transmitted towards me.

To get a message here meant that probably something unexpected has happened.

After Lily, I became anxious thinking about the arrival of another emergency but I quickly responded to the transmission.

“What happened?”

“Kurono-san, it’s big trouble——“

The contents told to me through the transmission was,

“What.....did you say.....”

Was a despairing thing that thrust defeat in front of me.

Chapter 129 - Miscalculation

The job of guarding the boundary of Alsace village was usually handled by thief class or any other quick witted and agile classes.

However, to keep an eye on the surroundings in a large area, the duty was given to summoners.

It was not really a major class among adventurers. Among the 100 adventurers in their alliance, only 3 were summoners.

In the first place, a summoner was a derivative class of magicians that focused on training monsters through spells and using them as familiar servants.

By using rank 1 monsters like dagger raptors and windwolves, they could cover a large area in their surveillance.

And that was applicable even when the battle was going on.

In the first place, due to the terrain around the cillage, it was almost impossible for the enemy to surround them or lead a surprise attack. So this familiar was only sent out as just a bare minimum precaution.

It could be said that it was actually meant more to make sure that monsters don't attack the village rather than the enemy coming from the rear, which had been deemed impossible.

But, the reason why they could immediately realize that the 'impossible' situation had become a reality was thanks to this familiar.

On the other side of the main gate protected by Kurono and the others, a windwolf of a certain summoner was running on the bridge made on the Reen river.

The windwolf looked like a wolf with light green fur and could use a wind Extra magic even though it was weak.

To complete the mission given by its master, the windwolves ran at full strength.

Their mission was the surveillance of the area and to inform in case they found an enemy.

And currently they were in process of doing the latter part of their mission. That was the proof that the 'enemy' had appeared on the opposite rear gate of the village.

2 kms away from the rear gate, on the highway, the windwolf had sighted the enemy.

"Wh, what the hell.....to think that such a big squad could have circled us and come from behind....."

The summoner read through what the windwolf saw telepathically and confirmed the fact.

"I must quickly inform Kurono-san—"

And that information was quickly delivered towards Kurono through the telepathic crystal.

"—Enemy squad sighted behind the village! It's an heavy armour knight squad of around a 100men!!"

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"—Enemy squad sighted behind the village! It's an heavy armour knight squad of around a 100men!!"

"What.....did you say....."

The moment I heard that, the words of defeat were thrust in front of me.

Due to the terrain it was extremely difficult for the enemy to go around and surround us. I had chosen Alsace as the defensive line for that very reason in the first place.

But that advantage had been easily overturned.

Shit, just when I was thinking that we might be able to protect the village today as well. I wished that this report was false.

I wanted to think that, but the option of continuing the battle while ignoring this report could not even exist in my head as I calmed slightly down.

“Kuh, this place won’t last now……we’ll retreat……”

I didn’t have the time to hesitate anymore. Now that our rears had been taken by the enemy, our loss had been confirmed here.

“……are you sure?”

A hesitating voice came from the other side of the crystal.

“Yeah, We’ll abandon Alsace. Give the signal for retreat. We need to get out of here as fast as possible.”

“Roger.”

As the transmission ended, the crystal broke as it had finished its job.

“Shit!!”

Why?! How did a low mobility squad like a 100 man heavy knight squad come to Alsace from behind?

There was a detour but if they used that it would have taken at least one week. I don’t think that’s possible here.

Even if they had forcibly gone through the thick dense forests, there’s no way we would have not realized a 100 man squad passing through.

We were definitely that vigilant, but, not a single movement had been seen by our observations.

I had no idea what kind of magic had they used to get so suddenly behind us.

No, maybe they might have a convenient magic that allowed them to transfer a whole squad to other places instantly.

Then what should I have done? Should I have also created a protective wall on the other side as well?

We barely had 1 week before the enemy came at us from the front main gate. We didn’t have surplus time to create another protective wall on the rear which had low chance of getting under attack. It was more than enough that we were able to deploy guards there.

Thanks to that we had been able to at least sense the enemy before they came rushing in from the rear gate. I guess our luck hasn't run out completely. I need to think that way or I won't be able to keep on going on like this.

"Alright, calm down, just think about running away now....."

Don't think about anything else, I can regret as much as I want later. If I, the leader, was late in giving my directions, I would end up sacrificing that many of my allies.

Calming down my heart, as I threw on a switch in my head, the signal of retreat, the sound of the horn, resounded throughout the battlefield.

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As the sound of the horn resounded, a black and white smoke spread out all over the front main gate.

"The demons are retreating! Don't let this chance escape, we'll press in!!"

On the other side of the river, Norz shouted in a loud voice to give his orders.

The smokescreen enveloping the battlefield was a trick to assist their retreat was a fact that was truly obvious.

"fuu, finally the balance has been broken."

"So it seems. I thought that it might last a bit longer."

Sylvia standing beside him also agreed to his statement.

Certainly, the assault team made up of the elite demons had decreased quite a lot of their numbers and were still attacking the heavy knight squad with full vigour.

Even Norz had understood that, but seeing them suddenly retreat, he didn't find it very doubtful either.

"With this, we'll finally capture this annoying village as well."

Norz who had now become certain of his victory loudly laughed as the Crusaders attacked while crossing the smokescreen.

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A dazzling flash attacked the eyes of the Pegasus Knights in the air.

“.....Tch, she ran away.”

Seeing Lily who had run away using this chance, Estel cursed.

“It seems she’s heading directly towards the Black Box.”

“It still isn’t the time for her ‘limit’ to end though—I see, it seems the battle has been settled on the ground.”

Seeing the smoke rise near the main gate and the Rone river, they understood that the demons had started to retreat.

“Will they run away like this, or will they coop up inside the Black box and fight it out? What do you think, Flan?”

“I doubt they would run away directly but, in any case, what we have to do remains the same.”

“Hah, that’s true. Then, let’s start the pursuit!!”

With Estel at the head, the Pegasus Knights began to move towards the Black guild of the village to attack it.

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(Kurono POV again)

With Vulcan as the lead, the assault team had kicked away the soldiers near the protective line and retreated till there.

As their rear guard, I was firing magic bullet arts beyond the smokescreen to hold off the enemies.

“When you use all the smoke balls it really produces way too much of the smoke.”

When the assault team had retreated in the previous battle, my black smoke was more than enough but this time we need to get everyone till the guild to escape.

Since the black smoke wouldn't be enough to cover the whole surroundings, we had to use lots of a famous item meant to use for fleeing called [Smoke ball].

The two smokes, black and white, were acting as a blinder in front of me.

“.....the preparations for the wall are, not done yet eh?”

While pulverising the soldiers that were running through the smoke with spears with my bullets, I steadily moved closer to the gate.

Since Fiona was still in bed, the other magicians were deployed to make a 'wall' to stop the enemies this time.

As I was thinking that the preparations should be completed; magical energy ran underneath my feet and indicated that a magic was about to be activated.

“Get back! Don't get swallowed up inside the wall!!”

As I took a big leap backwards from that place, the magicians activated their wide range defensive magics.

It appeared as a bulwark made of fire, ice, and earth and stopped the advancing enemies in their tracks.

In front of me was the jet black [Death Wall Defan] that I hadn't seen since the time we fought against those scout troops.

I should also learn to make at least a shield of this level. As the various types of walls stopped the enemies, I rolled in through the opened main gate.

“Good job coming back Boss!”(mossan)

“I made it somehow.”(kuroono)

Mossan came towards me while holding a wand that had ominous looking design in the shape of a skull.

“Alright, we were the last ones.”(kuroono)

“yes, everyone else has already rushed inside the guild.”(mossan)

As expected of adventurers. Such fast legs. It seems they’re good at retreating quickly as well.

“We should also hurry up. The shield is already starting to break.”(Kuroono)

“That’s right.”(mossan)

While giving a last glance as a halberd pierced through the [Death Wall Defan], I jumped inside the entrance of the guild.

Chapter 130 - The Fall of the Black Box

Inside the guild's lobby, every remaining adventurer had assembled and were beginning to evacuate through the escape route.

Seeing everyone's injured and worn out bodies, I once again realized that a fierce battle was taking place everywhere.

And above all, our numbers had decreased.

We were 103 adventurers in total but especially today, we lost 20 men leading to a major decrease in our forces.

But we're still inside battle. I don't have the time to grieve for them. We need to quickly evacuate from Alsace village.

"Vulcan, lead the assault team and make preparations at the rear gate first."

"Is that fine? You becoming the rear guard?"

"Don't worry. That was the plan from the start after all."

"Right, there was that as well. Then we'll leave first."

Everyone had already been told that an enemy heavy knight squad was approaching us from the rear.

And to escape through the highway, we'll have no other choice but to break through this 100 man squad.

That will be our last obstacle.

"Ah, Onii-san."

"Simon—-woah, it seems you had it tough as well."

Simon who was shouldering the [Yatagarasu] was completely covered in soot.

Looking closely, Simon's slender white arms had places that had red painful looking burns as well. She must have been targeted by fire attack magic.(T/N: kurono still doesn't know that Simon is a guy.)

“There were a lot of magicians after all. Everytime I shot, 10 fireballs were returned back towards me. It really was a pain to deal with.”

She gave a wry smile while saying that. It seems she’s still energetic.

“But I’m glad you were fine. C’mon, Simon should also hurry up and leave.”

“Un, then I’ll be going first—!?!”

As she said that, Simon’s head jerked suddenly.

It was a reaction as if a hammer had been hit but what had hit her head wasn’t a mass of steel but a mass of boobs.

“How can this be? Simon you’re injured, come, show them to me.”(susu)

“Ah, Susu-san.....”

Maybe her DP was still active, Su-san who appeared out of nowhere hugged Simon from behind.

Simon tried to get away while being embarrassed but couldn’t get away from Su-san serious locking arm.

At the same time, everytime Simon turned his head, the massive breasts on top her head swayed and bounced as if it was a slime——wait, it really is made of slime right?

“Don’t play around and go, you two.”(kurono)

“Oh my bad, then let’s go Simon.”(susu)

“Uua.....see you Onii-san.”

Simon looked like he wanted to say something but, in the end, was carried away by Su-san.

As I sent off those two women who got along well, most of the other adventurers had also departed it seems and the usually busy lobby not felt very lonely.

As I was feeling sentimental like that, the last member also returned.

“I’m back Kurono.”(lily)

Since Lily was holding back the Pegasus Knights till all of the rest evacuated, she was the last one to return back to the guild.

“It’s good that you are still safe.”(kuroono)

“We were only glaring each other after all.”

She had already returned to her child form but her mind was still in the normal state.

“I also confirmed from the air, a white armoured group was heading towards us.”(lily)

“I see. If it was just infantry soldiers, it would have been much easier though.”

“But, is it fine? We have only stopped them for 5 days. There’s a chance that they might catch up with the refugees you know?”

“Yeah, but we could make use of guerrilla warfare in the Gallahad mountain ranges to stop them for a 1 more day.”

“Really?”

“.....probably. We won’t know unless we try.”

Lily’s mean spirited smile was painful for my heart. Please don’t show such an evil smile while in the child form.

“fufu, it’ll be fine. We’ll make through somehow.”

“That’s true. Then Lily go first——“

“there’s no way I’m going before you. I’ll always be together with Kuroono and I have no intention to be away from you.”

Since there was need for Lily to be in the rear guard with me, I wanted her to leave first but she clung on to my hood of the robe as usual. I can’t even shake her off like this.

“Can’t be helped.”

As I patted her head who was sitting around my neck like a cat, she really calmed me down amazingly even though we were inside a battlefield of carnage.

“You seem to be pretty carefree even under such situations, Kurono-san.”

“Fiona!? Uu, Um, is it fine to walk already?”

The black clothed witch Fiona also appeared with her usual sleepy expression but, was it just me that felt that her expression was also giving off an extremely cold feeling?

“Complete recovery, is what I’d like to say but at least I can walk normally for now. I received a lot of potions after all.”(Fiona)

I could imagine Fiona gulping down all sorts of potions on her bed in my mind.

“Then I’ll go first and prepare the horses.”(Fiona)

“I’ll leave it to you.” (kurono)

After seeing Fiona off as she disappeared into the underground escape passage, the sound and the shock waves shaking the guild became bigger.

“Soon, this place will also become dangerous——“

Especially the entrance; they must have brought a battering ram as it’s making a loud banging sound.

No matter how much I have enhanced it, it’s only a matter of time before they break through if it continues like that.

“Now then, time for me to use my last trick as well.”

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(POV change)

The crusaders had, after crossing through the barbed wires and crushing through the wooden fence, finally broken through the Alsace protective wall.

Now that demons had stopped resisting and cooped up inside the guild, they were able to easily cross over the fence where they were struggling till now.

And finally, the end of this battle of was now in sight.

The crusaders rushed and flocked around the guild building known as the black box as if they were ants rushing towards sugar.

Around the guild, the visibility was still bad due to the smokescreens but since not even a single arrow was being fired towards them, they continued moving towards it at full pace.

Only the Pegasus Knights were unable to attack since they could not see the enemies from the air and were on standby in mid air. They simply decided to observe as the ground forces toppled that ominous building.

“Alright, one more strike!!”

Vigorous shouts resounded in front of the guild.

The soldiers were using the logs used for crossing the river to break the gate as well.

It was a non-magical primitive method but the log being lifted and swung by countless soldiers clearly had the destructive force as it bent the black magic enhanced gate with every hit.

And finally, after receiving damage beyond its limits, the black gate was broken down and the formidable Black box finally allowed the entry of invaders.

“It’s open!! Charge!!!”

“UOOOOHH!!!”

Raising a loud war cry, the troops rushed inside the guild.

The lobby was big enough to allow 100 adventurers stand together but under the waves of the rushing soldiers, it was quickly filled.

“What, the enemy isn’t here!!”

“Be careful, they might be hiding upstairs.”

“No, they must have an escape route! Search for it!!”

Since this wasn’t really out of their predictions, the troops moved quickly.

One of them climbed the stairs and checked every separate room. Another one checked for a secret escape route in the walls or the floor.

Probably, a request for searching had also been sent to the Pegasus Knights in the air.

At least, it was impossible for around 50 demons to suddenly disappear into nothingness.

They didn’t know whether they were hiding or had run away, but it was only a matter of time before they would be found.

That was what every Crusader was thinking.

bakii—bakiin—

An ominous sound resounded inside the ears of every soldier inside the guild.

“O, Oi, that was—”

A sound as if a pillar of wood had been broken, and, that was an absolutely correct thought as well.

With consecutive sounds of something vital breaking apart, the floor began to tremble.

“Quickly run!! It’s going to fall!!”

The soldiers quickly turned to run out of the guild but it was already too late.

The building loaded with countless troops instantly collapsed and also dragged the surrounding troops with it as well without allowing them any time to escape.

The loud sound of destruction resounded all over the surroundings as it drowned out the screams of the soldiers.

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(Kurono POV)

“—Blackening release.”

As I released the blackening on the guild, the wooden building instantly fell as I had already left a trick for that.

“Alright. Looks like that went well.”

“We did it!”

I did a high five with Lily on my shoulder.

The explosive sound and rumbling that reached even this escape passage proved that my trick had worked well.

If I destroyed the guild completely like this, I could also seal the entrance to this escape passage as well.

“nn, it looks like quite a lot of them were dragged into it as well.”(lily)

“Is that so? It seems the guild worked its best till the end. I must thank it.”(kurono)

Although I was the one who had enhanced it, the guild had really beared well till this time. If one day we were able to free back Alsace from the Crusaders, I’ll make sure to build a commemorative stone here for the guild.

“I’ve done all I could. All that’s left is too run away at full speed!”

“Un!”

Chapter 131 - Breaking Through the Enemy Lines

“You’re back Kurono!!”

After crossing the escape route, we were greeted by Vulcan ready to depart on his Bicorn.

“Yeah, I also buried those bastards alive with the guild as well.”

“hehehe, then, let’s hurry up and go.”

On the rear gate, numerous carriages for the purpose of our retreat had been prepared.

Using the horses used by the adventurers, we were pulling the hurriedly constructed carriages.

They were pretty big as well though they were not really magnificent. But it was just barely enough to transport everyone.

It’d be nice if it doesn’t break during the travel though. I could only hope that it at least holds till we reach the foot of the Gallahad mountain ranges.

“Well, before that there is also the problem whether we can break through the heavy knight squad or not.”

At the horizon of the flat road, numerous human figures could be seen.

While hoisting a flag with the emblem of the cross, that detestable heavy knight squad was the main reason behind why I decided to abandon Alsace.

“Let’s go! We’ll charge through at full speed!!”

This was the only way to break through them.

As the sound of whips striking the horses resounded, the carriage began to move forward while swaying.

While leaving behind the prints of hooves on the ground, the line of carriages sped out of the rear gate.

First we needed to cross over the wooden bridge that was built over the Reen river on this side.

Both Rone and Reen rivers were of similar sizes so the Crusaders would have trouble to cross the river on this side as well without the bridge.

“Are the explosives ready?”

“No problems there. We can start whenever!”

I was at the lead of the line. Using Lily’s telepathy I contacted with the magician on the last carriage in the line.

“Alright. Do it!”

“Roger—-[Ignis Kris Sagitta].”

Just as how we had destroyed the bridge on the Rone river 5 days back, using the magic item infused with fire attack magic, we blew up the bridge.

If there was no bridge, only the Pegasus Knights would be able to chase after us instantly. And with Lily still in good health, the Pegasus Knights won’t try and attack us very rashly.

With this, we have reduced the chances of them chasing us for now.

“All that’s left is to cut across the squad in front of us.”

The carriage which was already at top speed steadily reduced the distance between us and the enemy squad.

The carriage I’m on is the leading one. It was originally used by Vulcan’s party but right now, except for the beastman driver, the rest aren’t riding with us.

This carriage that will break through the enemy squad first is ridden by members with the max explosive power to open up a gap in the enemy squad lines.

I, Lily and Fiona of [Element Master], the three sisters of the [Three Hunting Princesses] and Mossan with the machinegun were currently riding this carriage.

On the right of the driver, I was sitting, and on his left was Fiona. On the roof of the carriage was Mossan with his machinegun along with Lily, who had already activated her DP at max power and was in her girl form. And Irina-san and the other were positioned on both the windows on the side with their magic bows.

Running parallel to this carriage were Vulcan on his Bicorn and many other high ranked adventurers who were brandishing their weapons, ready to clash with the enemy forces.

“Fiona, is it alright for you to fight? Both in terms of magical energy and the range in which you attack.”(kuroono)

I asked Fiona, who was holding a red wand that I had never seen before.

“I’m fine in both senses. This [FireBall] is wand that will only release a set amount of firepower no matter how much magical energy is poured into it after all.”(Fiona)

“.....you had something convenient like that as well.”

Then, wouldn’t it been fine to have used just that when entering an adventurer party before? But Fiona soon rejected my thoughts.

“It’s something an amateur magician uses who can’t even properly use a low level magic.”

“Aah, because it will still fire the same amount of power even then, I see.”

And, once the magician becomes able to use magic stronger than this [FireBall], it would signify that the magician has graduated from this wand.

“Then isn’t the fire produced by it weak?”(kuroono)

“It’ll be alright. I have customised it to rapid fire attacks. It’ll be useless against high ranked monsters but it’ll still be effective to stop the heavy knights.”

“I see. Then I’ll be counting on you.”

“If you say that much, then it was worth it to have shamefully mixed up as a first year student even though I was a third year just to buy this staff.”

Ah, I feel like I read another page of her Black History.(T/N: black history=embarrassing/sad past)

“Hey, don’t have fun talking while excluding me. I’ll feel lonely!”(lily)

Lily’s complaining voice came from above.

“Sorry, that wasn’t really the intention.”(kuroono)

“GaHaHa, to be jealous even at such a time, you really are cute little fairy!”(Mossan)

“Stop talking in that manner to me, will you?”(lily)

“St, stop! Please stop! That light is really bad for a skeleton like me! I’ll be purified, really—-“

I couldn’t really see from here but I could see something shining above.

“They sure do get along.”(kuroono)

“Oh, is Kuroono-san also envious?”(Fiona)

“nn, yeah, that might be true.”(kuroono)

“—too bad Lily-san, it seems there’s no hope.”

Fiona muttered something. What the hell does she mean by hope?

“You bastards, stop playing around while the enemy is in front of you! Show some damn fighting spirit, will ya!!”

Vulcan shouted at us from the side.

“Sorry, my bad.”(kuroono)

Pulling myself back together, I began pouring magical energy inside my [Black Ballista Replica] and began attack preparations.

The heavy knights were already close enough to see them clearly.

“Is everyone ready?—-“

And finally, the carriage entered the attack range.

We fired our strongest magics to open up a gap inside the line of heavy knights in front of us.

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A group with silver armour, halberd and tower shield, similar to the heavy knights Kurono had fought not some time ago, were moving through the highway.

In front of them, a line of carriages was approaching towards them at full speed.

The moment when the distance between them reached 100m, an immense wave of magical energy was generated from the carriages.

But even in front of such a clear attack from the carriages, the heavy knights kept on moving forward without speaking a single word.

“Magic Bullet Arts- Gatling Burst.”

The first attack that reached the heavy Knights was two streams of black bullets.

The black bullets fired by Kurono’s baton and Mozrun’s machinegun directly hit this wall of steel.

With a violent metallic sound, a huge dust of cloud was raised from the bullets that dug into the ground.

After the fast bullets, a bunch of fist sized fireballs and lightnings attacked.

The fireballs were [Ignis Sagitta] fired by Fiona using [Custom FireBall].

Although not as fast as Kurono’s bullets, those fireballs attacked at a speed that could overturn common sense, and exploded as soon as they came into contact with the steel armours and stopped their advance.

With a electrifying shrill sound, the members of the [Three Hunting Princesses] fired an intermediate level wide range attack magci, [Line OverBlast] with their bows.

Passing through the metal armour, the lightning attacked with an even bigger effect and range.

They had been struck pretty hard by the bullets, fireballs and lightning, but the strongest attack had yet to come.

“—[Meteor Strike].”

A light magic circle appeared over the heavy knights and a mass of rainbow coloured light fell down from it.

So that the carriage could pass through, Kurono had warned Lily to not create a crater so Lily had held back quite a lot but,

DOGOGOGOGOO!!

It still had enough firepower to blow away the heavy knights on the highway.

A seven coloured explosion and shock waves covered the area but Kurono and the others' carriages kept on moving without paying it any mind.

Their formation had already been disrupted due to the [Meteor Strike] but the heavy knights once again began to move with their halberds to seal the highway.

But by that moment, the leading carriages had already thrust into the group of heavy knights.

“[Air Slash]!!”

Vulcan, under the DP of Wolfegand, attacked the heavy knights with his large blade enveloped in wind.

And, Kurono, who had shifted from long range magic bullets to his cursed hatchet in his hand, released his martial art towards the knights coming towards him with their halberds.

“Kuronagi—-!?!”

The jet black slash cleanly split the heavy knight's halberd and armour together.

But, at that moment, Kurono realized the ‘abnormality’ in that heavy knight squad.

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“Kuronagi—-“

I released my martial art skill to block against the halberd aimed towards us.

The blades clashed for a second, and the ominous edge of the [grudge hatchet- Hararetsu] cut apart the steel handle of the halberd without any resistance at all and futher moved on to split the full plate armour as well.

“—!?!“

But, it’s weird.

This feeling was definitely weird.

I had felt something was strange when they didn’t use any defensive martial arts nor any defensive magics even though we had started to attack them from a long range but, now I’m sure.

“These guys aren’t heavy knights.....”

“”Eh??””

As I muttered so, both Lily and Fiona reacted to my words without stopping their attacks.

I once again released a martial art towards another one of these ‘fake’ heavy knights.

As expected, there was no resistance from their armours even though they are supposed to be heavily sturdy due to defensive enchantments. I remembered this feeling of cutting through, also, no blood spewed out from the place that I had cut either. Now I was perfectly sure.

“These are light golems!!”

Movements that are so monotone that they could never be called an 'elite' squad, also extremely weak armour.

They were the light golems, that I had once fought against during the maneuvering experiments.

"What's going on.....then are these just dolls for show——"

Could it be that they had been deployed behind us to intentionally make us retreat, meaning, it was fake/decoy troops!!

When I thought that,

"Oi, this is dangerous! Stop!!"

Vulcan's loud voice resounded.

"What, is that——barbed wires!?"

As I looked towards it, black thorn-like arrangements had been spread all over as if to seal the highway.

They were exactly the same as the barbed wires used on the main gate of Alsace to stop the soldiers.

And I remembered that barbed wires could also be used to stop not just soldiers but horses as well.

Vulcan pulled the reins of his Bicorn and somehow stopped before it stepped on the barbed wires.

But this was a carriage with 8 people on it, without any way to stop suddenly nor decelerating much, we crashed into the barbed wires.

"Shit——"

The moment I realized that this carriage would definitely overturn and resolved myself to jump down,

"Uoh, What now!?"

The hood of my robe was suddenly grabbed and my body was thrown in mid-air.

Why? The carriage hasn't toppled yet—or rather, right now, I saw the wheels of the carriage getting stuck in the barbed wires.

I hadn't realized what had happened instantly, but after I landed on the other side of the barbed wires, I finally realized what happened.

“.....Lily, is it?”

“Sorry, I could just barely save Kurono only.”

As her wings flashed as they flickered, the girl Lily looked towards me from my side with upturned eyes.

“No, thanks for the help.”

“ufufu, you're welcome.”

Foreseeing that the carriage was about to topple sideways, Lily, who was on the roof, quickly grabbed me and rescued me.

“Everyone else is—“(kurono)

“They're adventurers, they won't die so easily.”(lily)

As I looked, various figures stood up from within the barbed wires and from inside the fallen carriage.

“Oi! You guys alright!?”(kurono)

“.....Lily-san you're so cruel, you abandoned me.”(Fiona)

“Sorry, it happened all too quick so I only had time to save just one person.”

As Fiona appeared from the barbed wires, she protested against Lily as she straightened her fallen hat.

Well I also feel sorry that only I had been saved by Lily but at least I'm glad that they aren't injured.

As a silver lining, only our carriage had toppled from the barbed wires. Rest of them that were behind us had been able to stop just in time.

“No, this isn't the time to be relieved yet.”

But still, since we had been surrounded by quite a big number, not to mention that the highway had been sealed by the barbed wires, it doesn't look like we'll be able to break through very easily.

In the end, our advance had been perfectly stopped here.

If we stay slow, they might use this chance to attack with the Pegasus Knights and even soldiers might cross the Reen river as well.

"No other choice, we'll defeat all of them right here and now!! The enemy might look like heavyknights but were actually light golems. They aren't much stronger than your average soldier, we can defeat them easily!!"

On the other side of the barbed wires, the adventurers climbed down from the carriages and quickly drew their weapons.

As expected of adventurers, they were able to quickly deal with the changing situation without panicking.

"Ora Kurono! Don't be lazy and come over here as well!"

Vulcan brandished his large sword as he shouted towards me.

"Ou, I'll be there soon——"

"nono, you have to stay here."

Suddenly a man's voice came from my side.

".....who is it."

As I looked towards the source of that voice, I saw a young man leaning on one of the trees of the forest on the side of the highway.

With ruffled long, light brown hair and loose clothes that exposed his bare body. On his trained muscled chest, a necklace with an emblem of a cross was shining.

His appearance felt like a delinquent yankee even in this world.

But, the long sword hanging on his waist and the short wand in his hand that was of a type I had never seen, clearly proved that this man was a mercenary trained in fighting.

I can't sense any killing intent but there was still an unspeakable unpleasant atmosphere.

"Oi Oi, you're not supposed to ask 'who is it?' now, right? Even though I had 'looked after you' back then, How cruel of you! Oh but, maybe you don't remember me cuz I was wearing a mask back then? Hiyahahaha!!"

He laughed in an irritating way, but I didn't really care about that. But what the fuck did he say just now?

"You can't be....."

"hehehe, even though you had gone through all the trouble to run away to Pandora. Too bad, but I've come to take you back, No. 49!!"



Chapter 132 - Experimental Squad (Hundred Numbers)

Surprise and anger stirred up inside my mind.

Those painful days, memories of fighting against monsters everyday due to those white masked bastards, is still vividly burned inside my mind. But still, after meeting and living with Lily, I had finally gotten back my peace of mind.

I had not considered that those masked bastards of that experimental facility were closer to me even when Irz village was burned by the crusaders and when I was fighting them for the villagers to escape safely.

But,

“Say Oi, you seem to having a lot of fun living with those women. Also fighting so desperately along these shitty demons, is this country so important for you? HUH!?”

One of those masked bastards has arrived here.

Why, how, why now——such questions didn’t come from my mouth. I only asked this.

“You’ve come to take me back? What’s that supposed to mean?”(kurono)

“How dare a damned ‘foreigner’ speak like a human with me!—-is what I’d like to say but fine. You’re special so I’ll talk with you.”

With a listless expression, the man walked right in the middle of the highway.

(“Kurono, should I kill him?”)

Lily used her telepathy to talk with me.

(“No, not yet. I have a mountain load of things I want to ask him. I know that we don’t have time but.....just play along for a while.”)

(“If Kurono says so then fine. But I’ll say this in advance, I’m already——”)

Out of time. As she spoke,

“Ah, Lily!?”

Enveloped in a dazzling light, Lily,

“Kurono.”

Returned back to her child form.

“buhahaha! What the heck, why did it turned into a brat? What a waste.” (mask)

The man laughed defencelessly. As if to hide from his unpleasant gaze, Lily hid behind my legs.

“Uu!”

Lily clearly showed her displeased expression towards the man. She’s like a cat who was trying to intimidate its opponent.

“Answer my question.”

“It’s a coincidence. Total coincidence. As if I would come all the way to Pandora just for someone like you. But, now that I have come across you, I have no choice but to capture you right? Even though there had been 0 escapees till now, because of you our reputation was tainted.”

A coincidence, eh? I don’t know serious he is but I guess he really is here not to capture me but for some other objective.

“hehe, don’t make such a difficult face. It seems you really don’t know anything about yourself or us.”

“What is your objective? Why was I, no, why were we summoned to this world?”

“But, I have no obligation to explain all that to you. If you want to know, then ask the geezers in Elysion by yourself. I think they’ll tell you how many toys like you they have made and everything as well clearly.”

The man smiled jokingly from the bottom of his heart. Shit, how much does he want to play around?

“Don’t make such a scary face, if you let yourself get captured peacefully, I’ll give you a special service and tell you everything I know—“

At that moment, something that had been hiding on the sides, jumped out on the road.

Except for the common helm, they were wearing random armours on their bodies. Probably, they are those mercenaries that had attacked us the day before yesterday.

Judging by their bodies, 2 are men, 2 are women. A total of four people.

As they quickly assembled beside that man, their movements showed no wastage. It seems they are not mediocre as they look.

“—for example, just how much these ones begged for their lives.”(man)

As the man snapped his fingers, reacting to that sound, the 4 people removed their helms.

“You worthless scum.....these guys are your new experimental bodies eh?”

They had the pretty much same age. Those black hair and black eyes that had been revealed were no doubt the same as me, people of japan.

“They are the experimental squad the Hundred numbers. Actually, not me but No.49, you were supposed to lead these brats you know?”

100 numbers you say? You mean you sacrificed 50 more people after me?

I can't forgive this, but, since I myself had only run away with all I had and had not even thought of going against that facility, I might not have the right to say anything to them either.

Although, now that they have completely lost their ego, my words wouldn't reach them anyway.

There was no light in the eyes of those 4 people. Their eyes had a dull swamp-like black colour and it was irritating just to see it. They must have been brought under complete control with those white rings.

I have experienced it that's why I know that they will never have their consciousness back ever again.

“So, what do you say? If you surrender then you'll be happily appointed as the commander of these hundred numbers as per the original plan. Of course with the [Thought controller – Angel Ring] attached though.”

While grinning, the man touched the ring on the head of the girl beside him.

So its called [Angel Ring]. Giving it such a ridiculous name, I only became more and more disgusted and annoyed.

“I refuse. I’ll kill you as well as these experimental bodies right here.”

I took out my hatchet in my right hand and baton in my left.

I don’t have the time to talk with him anymore, and it doesn’t seem like he’s going to talk anyway.

“Oioi, you’re so damn cold. Aren’t they of the same ‘Japanese’ race of yours? Don’t you want to even try to save them?”

“You should know it best right? Even if I removed the ring now, their consciousness and personalities will never return.”

In the first place, I can barely protect myself. I don’t have the power to protect them as well.

In such a situation I will not show any mercy to my ‘enemies’.

Then, all I can do out of pity is to kill them so that they can’t be used by this motherfucker.

“Tch, you really are a troublesome bastard. No choice then— Seal Unlock, blow away No.49’s limbs and bring him to me.”

“”Roger.””

With those words, the equipment they were wearing suddenly dispersed in the air like black particles. The disappeared armour was replaced by a grey robe and everyone of them changed to look the same.

“”Preparing for battle—“”

As they held up their right hands, black particles converged and became a black long sword.

And on their left hands, just like the sword, a black baton was created.

And behind them 3 long swords floated in mid-air.

“”——Complete.””

“The same black magic as me, huh?”

Their armaments are so similar to me, as if they had been looking at me till now.

If they can use the same abilities as me as well then this will become a 1 vs 4 trial of strength.

No, if I were to add that grinning bastard as well then there were 5 enemies.

“Kurono! Lily will fight as well!!(lily)

“Yeah, I know——“

I ended up smiling towards Lily as she asserted by pulling my robe.

That’s right, I have a reassuring partner as well. It’s different from how I was fighting alone in that facility.

Now that they have come along with experimental bodies, I won’t get a better opponent to unleash my hatred than this.

“——Let’s go.”

I’ll make you regret coming in front of me.

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“Uorraaaaaa!!”

Vulcan’s large sword slashed away the light golem along with its fake armour as if it was paper.

“Hah, there really is no resistance.”

He who had been fighting against the actual elites just a while ago, could only feel disappointed towards these powers.

“Oi, don’t go too far off Vulcan. They are still stronger than goblins and they have quite a lot of numbers as well.”

A beastman of the same party stopped Vulcan as he was about to jump further into the enemies.

“My bad, my bad, I had been fighting like that just a while ago so it was unintentional.”

As his sharp wolf eyes looked around, he realized that the members of his {Vulcan Powered} were fighting in their usual formation beside him.

Only, it felt a bit sad to be using this formation again after they had lost one of their members who had taken part in the assault team.

“But still, this really feels like a normal collaborated monster clean-up quest.”

As he looked around, just like them, the other adventurers were also fighting with their original parties, and were in formation.

Warrior centric parties had become lesser due to the high death rate of the assault team but they were compensating for that with the help of solo adventurers and teaming up with other parties.

During quest, that too in front of the enemy, to take up formations like that so smoothly, the various parties needed an extreme amount of trust and faith in the other even though there were chances of being tricked by the other party. But that trust and faith had been built up during this battle at Alsace.

Thus, none of them felt anxious as they very naturally entrusted each other's back to others and concentrated on the enemy in front of them which allowed to deal with them much quickly.

“Alright, let's quickly finish up these puppets—oh!”

Instinctively, he guarded with his large sword against the killing intent and magical energy aimed towards him.

“This one is!?!”

As expected, the enemy's attack magic was easily blocked by the [Evil Eater] and absorbed completely by the large sword.

But, Vulcan clearly saw the black bullet fired towards him before it was absorbed by his sword.

“Isn’t this Kurono’s Magic Bullet Arts!?!”

Did he actually misfire? No that was impossible.

That’s because the one who had fired that was standing right in front of him.

“Hah, what the actual fuck? He can use Magic Sword Arts as well?!”

The enemy that had jumped in mid air using the shoulder of one of the light golems as a foothold possessed similar armaments as Kurono except for the grey robe he wore.

In his right hand was a black long sword and in his left was a grey baton. And behind him were floating 2 swords of the same black material.

From the air, the Kurono ‘replica’ moved towards Vulcan to slash at him and foreseeing the time their blades would clash, he controlled the 2 floating swords and fired them towards Vulcan.

“Tch, doing troublesome things—”

Vulcan full swung his large sword like a bat hitting a ball.

The Evil Eater had a bigger reach and the blade attacked the opponent blade and repelled him away through sheer power.

After that, Vulcan magnificently dodged the 2 flying swords by using the wind enveloping him due to the DP of Wolfegand.

The 2 swords that missed its targets began to return back to its user but one of them was struck by Vulcan’s large sword as he swung it back and was smashed to little pieces.

“The bastard withdrew, eh?”

The grey robed magician had already disappeared from in front of him. He had simply jumped back even further when he was flung away and once again mixed among the puppets like an assassin.

A distance had been created for now, but Vulcan did not drop his guard and continued to survey the surroundings with his large sword still in his hands.

("Oi Oi, there are quite a lot of these Kurono 'replicas' hidden among them.")

As he looked, he saw many other adventurers come under attack like him from the grey robed men.

He had been able to repel him with his ability but it didn't go that well for others.

They could control 3 swords at the same time. There were very few who knew how to deal with such attacks.

Even a rank 3 would end up getting slightly injured. It was that troublesome of an attack.

"Oi, everyone be careful! There are guys that can use the same techniques as Kurono mixed up within them!"

""Roger!!""

"Damn, who the hell are these troublesome bastards? Do they have some connection with Kurono?....."

As Vulcan raised his large sword while complaining like that, he had no way of knowing that beyond the barbed wires, Kurono was currently fighting against that person that had a 'connection' with him.

Chapter 133 - Element Master Vs Hundred Numbers (1)

“Magic Bullet Arts.”

Let’s make the first move. Heavy knights had blacked it with their armour and shields but a magician’s robe wouldn’t be able to do the same.

Black bullets appeared around me and turned towards the experimental bodies.

Reacting to my actions,

“Uuuu!!”

Lily also deployed her Oracle Field and entered an attack stance.

I swung my baton to fire a storm of bullets without any gap towards the 4 experimental bodies that were protecting the man.

And above them a magic circle of light that possessed incredible destructive power also appeared.

It was impossible to dodge. In the first place, if they wanted to protect that man, they couldn’t let even a single attack magic to pass through them.

“ال دفاع الداكنة السوداء الجدران الظلام ان تشار منع”

I had expected them to take defensive measures obviously, but I didn’t expect them to know how to chant as well. Are they even more skilled than me or has the experiment simply moved further.

“—Black Wall.”

The chants of the 2 men on the sides were completed and a defensive shield was deployed around them.

A black wall, similar to [Death Wall Defan], appeared in a wide range.

But these shields were not made of dark magical energy but black magic. They look the same but the quality is different.

At least a materialized black magical energy shield would be much more effective in blocking my bullet arts.

But why is it that every other experiment except me was so good at making defensive shields? Do I just lack the talent at it?

Well leaving that aside for now, the shields that appeared were 2 in number. One in front to block my bullets and one above to block Lily's attack.

From here it looked like they had been suddenly covered by a black rectangle.

"Full Burst!!"

"Eei!!"

The moment their defensive magics activated, our attacks were shot out.

More than a thousand bullets were shot out and a pillar of light came down like lightning to envelop the black shields with a flash of black and white. A shockwave and sounds of explosion resounded.

With the sound of shattering glass, the black shields broke.

"So they nullified each other out."

The shields had been broken through but not even a single bullet or a beam of light could reach them. No, I guess it was a good thing that our attacks were able to at least break their shields.

""Automatic Fencing – Auto Killer.""(experiments)

Just when the black shields were destroyed, the 2 women began to attack with the swords in their hands and the ones floating behind them.

But still, [Automatic Fencing] sounds so nostalgic. It wasn't [Magic Sword Arts] back then during the maneuvering experiments.

And it had the exact same effect as my own attack. That is, swords came attacking on their own.

Excluding the swords in their hand, there were $3 \times 2 = 6$ total swords.

"They're aiming for Lily?—"

Rather my sturdy body, they must have decided that it would be easy to defeat Lily who had a child like body or maybe they found the pillar of light to be dangerous.

In any case, what I have to do hasn't changed.

“—Don't you dare even think of touching Lily in front of me you fuckers!! Magic Sword Arts!!”

I faced the blackened swords flying like arrows with my own 10 swords.

I sent 2 swords towards 1 of theirs. I can easily bring them down.

The swords used by the enemies are a total of 6, meaning 1 of their swords will definitely pass through.

“Oraaa!!”

Putting my vigour behind it, I used my favourite partner, the cursed hatchet, to bring the last one down.

Both were blackened blades but my Hararetsu's performance was overwhelmingly better.

The edge of the hatchet that was shining with a black aura completely pulverised the blackened blade that was flying towards Lily.

(“Lily step back a little.”)

(“Un!”)

Connecting through Telepathy, we smoothly entered our roles as vanguard and rear guard.

Even if I was a newbie adventurer, I had been constantly doing quests along with Lily for the past 3 months. We could easily use such simple coordinated movements.

I moved in between the 2 women who were aiming for Lily.

Without any change in their expression, they came rushing directly towards us.

“”Slash.””

Both of them released the martial art [Slash] at the same timing. I'm surprised that they even know martial art skills! They didn't teach me anything like that!

But you're not the only ones who can use martial arts.

"Kuronagi!!"

I was superior in both, the ability of my weapon and the power of my martial art. It was easy to counter attack against both of them with the same one attack. In fact I had enough power to force them back.

With a loud sound of metal clashing, 3 swords intersected as they released sparks.

As expected, the two women were outmatched by my Kuronagi and were blown back 2 steps.

They didn't really broke their stance but that was enough to provide an opening to attack.

"Yaah!!"

With a cute sound that came from behind me, 2 balls of light rushed towards them.

The balls of light that possessed tracking ability, easily passed through me and rushed towards those two. It had the perfect timing that did not allow even time to use defensive magic.

""Black Bullet rifle.""

But, the balls of light were blocked by the black bullets that were rapid fired from the front.

It was a protective fire made by those two men behind them.

It seems that side can perform pretty good coordinated movements.

""Black Buckshot.""

I stepped forward to attack further but the two women quickly back stepped to create a distance between us and fired buckshot towards me to stop me.

“Kuh, Black Shield!”

I stopped right there and deployed my defence. Though buckshot has a wide range, it lacks power. It could only barely put some cracks in my shield.

But still, just how much more are they going to imitate my moves before they are satisfied? At least try to name it something else other than ‘Buckshot’! Do you even know what it means!?

“.....so we’re back to how it was.”

Leaving that aside, the 2 women who had attacked Lily had now retreated back towards the 2 men.

The swords held by those 2 had now cracks due to my Kuronagi.

It seems that the effect of losing the enchant of black magic on receiving a huge shock attack was also the same as me. In fact, theirs’ seems to be even weaker.

Were they being stingy while pouring the black magic inside the sword?

While I was thinking that, the 2 women threw away that sword and brought out new ones and blackened them for use.

I see, so they have countless replacements.

At the same time, I also realized that those black swords were not made completely of black magic but were actually brought out through Dimension magic.

To be able to bring out materials directly in their hands; it seems that their Dimension magic is one step above my own [Shadow Gate].

I seem to be superior in direct attacking strength and magical energy quantity, but in everything else they seem to have better skill. I need to stay on guard.

(“Kuro!”)

(“What happened Lily?”)

As her voice resounded inside my head, I still kept on paying attention towards those 4 as well.

("Well, it seems they are also connected with telepathy!")

(".....These 4 are?")

("Yes! So they are able to move even when they cannot see!")

I see. So that was the trick behind their coordinated attacks and perfect timing.

I don't know whether that's due to their black magic, or due to the ring in their hand or maybe they have communication device embedded inside their heads, but in any case this really is a troublesome ability.

Even a normally weak monster can overpower a higher ranked adventurer by attacking in groups. To be able to communicate within thoughts is an extremely amazing advantage for group battles.

("Can you jam it?")(kurono)

So if they lose it, it'll also become a huge minus for them.

If they were experimented later than me, then not much time should have passed since they were 'created'. If they lose their telepathy, they won't be able to use a high coordination team play like now.

("uu, sorry Kurono, I can't do it now. It'll take too much time.")

("How long?")

("1 min...but if they are using a [Mind jammer], Lily won't be able to do anything.")(T/N: constant reminder- Lily talks in third person many times when in child form.)

I should be able to tank them alone for 1 min but if Lily won't be able to attack at all, it'll become troublesome.

If their telepathy gets jammed, I alone could take care of them but if I go on full assault, who'll protect Lily?

On the other side, they are in battle with the 100 light golems. I can't expect any reinforcement to come from that side by crossing the barbed wires.

Then, the very best action we can take is to kill that masked bastard as quickly as possible—

“oo, as expected of that old geezer, you’re made very well No.49. Is 4 people too easy for you?”(masked bastard)

“Then how about you fight as well? You’re acting as their leader in my place right?”(kuronono)

“How can you even think of me as a just a boss of these things? A human chosen by god will only treat a foreigner that is even lower than a slave as just an item to ‘use as much as he can’! Just as how God won’t take actions for humans, why would a human like me act against foreigners like you—“

As he snapped his fingers, 4 more appeared from the forest on the sides.

Their equipment and armaments were exactly the same but the blackened swords behind them were only 2. They must be weaker than the previous ones.

But, suddenly the number of opponents doubling is not a very good. Considering that all 8 of them are connected with Telepathy, their teamwork would be a deadly threat.

“Well, I doubt an uncivilised imbecile foreigner could understand what I was saying.”

While hearing the man’s unpleasant laugh, I decided.

I really need to kill this man first and foremost.

Chapter 134 - Element Master Vs Hundred Numbers (2)

There were 4 standing in front of me and Lily. 2 on each side and behind us was the black barbed wires. We had been completely surrounded by 8 people.

The problem is how to break through this encirclement.

“Well, I can’t think of anything but using brute force in such a situation—.”

ZUDODODON!!

“Uoh, what the hell!?”

Suddenly, flames exploded on the right side and swallowed up the 2 experimental bodies standing there.

From inside the smoke, a black figure came out.

“I’m also a member of the party. I’ll be troubled if you don’t make fight as well.”

“Fiona! You came at the perfect time!”

While holding a red wand, Fiona came towards us with her usual expression.

“It seems that the opponent has some sort of connection with Kurono-san but that doesn’t change the fact that we have to defeat them, right?”(Fiona)

“Yeah, after dealing with these guys I’ll explain it to you later.”(kurono)

“I understand.”

Due to Fiona’s surprise attack, the 2 on the right side had already been dealt with.

The experimental bodies remaining are 6. I think we can do this now!

“Lily, Fiona, I leave these guys to you. I’ll take care of destroying their leader.”

“Un, leave it us Kurono!!”(lily)

“Roger that.”(Fiona)

I’m the most suitable to break through with brute force. Lily in her child form and Fiona who is not at max magical energy, these two should have enough power to deal with the remaining 6 experiments.

If I can quickly take care of that disgusting bastard, their chain of command will definitely crumble.

After that we could take down the remaining experimental bodies, or even running away wouldn’t be too difficult. Getting away from here is the priority after all.

There might be a better plan to deal with the current situation but I don’t have the time to do that right now.

“Let’s go!”

Both parties moved at the same time.

“”Black Bullet – Rifle.””

As the bullets were fired towards us from the left and front, the 2 women and one man from the side once again attacked with their swords as well.

“Black Shield.”

I deployed the shield to block the bullets and lowered my body as I began sprinting.

For the time being, my opponents are the 4 in front of me. I’ll leave the 2 on the side to Lily and Fiona.

“Haaaa!!”

I kept on running forward while blocking the bullets with my shield.

They can’t stop me from moving with gunfire of such a low level.

Even if I don’t use my shield, their [Rifle] that is much less harder than my [Magic Bullet Arts] would be blocked by my [Baphomet’s Embrace].

But, just as how the shock of the bullet is still received even when you're wearing a bulletproof vest, I would also feel the impact which is something I really don't want to experience.

In front of me, the two women rushed towards me with $3 \times 2 = 6$ swords, just like before.

As I looked at their faces again, I felt disturbed as I remembered the faces of my classmates but I quickly shook off my nostalgia, pity as well as sadness and focused on the battle.

"Magic Sword Arts—"

Out of the 10 swords I brought out, I used 6 to block against their [Auto Killer]. The rest 4 were thrown towards the 2 men behind the girls who were providing covering support fire.

While controlling the magic swords and with my shield still deployed, I dashed with full speed by putting power and magical energy in my feet.

The shield had begun to crack from the continuous gunfire but its hardness is still there. I'll just use it to ram into them like this.

It is not as strong as the Tower shields used by the heavy knights but it's enough to stop those girls.

"Slash."

"—daaaaahh!!"

The shield was destroyed under the simultaneous attack from the two girls' blackened swords, But,

"—!"

"...."

I brilliantly pushed the 2 girls aside with my shield tackle.

One of them was able to maintain her balance by taking a few steps back but the other one fell down and gave a clear opening.

"Kuronagi!"

Without any mercy, I released my martial art towards the fallen girl.

The black horizontal slash blew away her left arm holding the sword.

I had aimed to spit her whole body but it seems she was able to react at the last moment and evaded.

“Black Smoke.”

Rather than continuing my attack, I decided to use smokescreen.

In the first place, my target was the enemy boss. Rather than staying here to finish them off, it's more necessary to ignore them and move forward.

Also, even though her arm was cut off, I doubt they even have a sense of pain. They would simply keep on attacking while ignoring the injury.

“See ya, I'll be going on ahead.”

I once again ran further as the 2 girls were captured inside the smoke.

Something like a buckshot was also fired from behind me but I ignored it and kept running. I'll leave these 2 to Fiona and Lily.

My next opponents were the 2 men.

”الدفاع الداكنة السوداء الجدران الظلام ان تشار منع”

Seeing me rush towards them to attack, they should have understood my intentions even if they don't really have a will of their own.

Stopping their [Rifle] attacks, they began chanting.

Beside them were 4 broken blackened swords. They must have destroyed those I had fired earlier.

Damn, I had used most of my swords during the battle with the heavy knights so these were the last 10 of my swords. Damn them for destroying my precious reserves like this.

Well, thanks to that these guys had been unable to fire when I faced those 2 girls though.

“—Return.”

I called back the 6 swords that had been blocking the enemy's [Auto Killer].

As long as I can see them, I can perfectly control each and every sword and even if they are out of my sights, I can still control them by speaking like this. Thus, the swords returned back and floated behind me.

“—[Black Wall].”

As my swords returned, in front of me the jet black wall had been deployed.

It was a defensive magic that was able to match my and Lily's combined attack and nullify it. I'm a bit lacking in power for destroying them alone.

“But, it doesn't matter if I have come till here.”

The height of the black wall was around 4m on both sides. Normally one would advance after breaking it or taking a detour.

But, don't underestimate my physical capabilities!!

“Haa!!”

Kicking the ground hard enough to make it sink in a little, I jumped towards the black wall.

I, who had already jumped at about 3m, kicked the surface of the wall again and rose even further.

As I reached the max height of the jump, I was already above the wall.

I stepped on it lightly once again, and crossed over the wall just like that.

“—Pierce through!”

I sent the 6 swords towards the 2 men on the ground.

And I pointed my baton towards that ex-masked bastard that was standing in the middle of the highway.

“Ooh, not bad No.49.”

“Don't call me by that name—”

My eyes met with his in mid air.

As usual I can't sense any killing intent from him. As he released an unpleasant atmosphere, I,

“My name is—”

Instantly, countless black bullets appeared.

Its aim was obvious, the mad bastard from that research facility.

“—Kuroono!!” (kuroono)

I released a black storm filled with the intent to kill—

Chapter 135 – Fairy and Witch (1)

Fiona and Lily jumped inside the forest from the highway as if escaping from the rain of black bullets.

“I really don’t want to take that attack on with no shield or cover.” (lily)

“Oh, Lily-san you ‘woke up’ now?”

A dazzling emerald green sphere and a black clothed witch were running through the dense green forest.

“You can’t cooperate with the child me. I’m forcibly trying to retain my consciousness, be grateful for that”

Lily in her small form inside the oracle field stares at Fiona with stabbing eyes.

“Thank you for going through the trouble.”

While Fiona expresses her not-very-thank-you gratitude, she swung her ‘Custom Fire Ball’.

The wand reacted to the fire type magic being poured into it. And just like the effect of the magic equation inserted in it, the fireball that is made is always of the same level of power.

But the customized ‘Fire Ball’ makes the formation of numerous Ignis Sagita at the same time, which should have only be fired one by one, possible.

The fireballs fired consecutively intercept the 2 blackened swords coming towards Lily and Fiona like missiles. The blackened swords lose their black magic coating by the explosions from the fireballs and fall down as they can’t be controlled anymore.

“The ‘Dolls’ are all coming here right?”

“1,2,3.....There are 9 in total. Just why might they be multiplying?”

Though the figure of gray colored robe cannot be seen, but Fiona can count their exact amount of number by sensing the subtle amount of magical power.

“It’s obvious that they increased in numbers because you came here. Aside from that, it looks like that flashy man wants to go one-on-one with Kurono.”

Separating his own subordinates personally, is a really convenient choice for this(Fiona & Lily) side.

“Though it is convenient, is that person really that confident?”

It appears like the other side is also wanting to go one-on-one with Kurono.

“Apparently. Most probably, he is the type of guy who has never failed even once in his life.”

“Have you ‘seen it’?”

“Even if you don’t peek in his mind, you can still somehow understand that much.”

“You’re right. There was a person like that in my school too—Isn’t it good around here?”

They just wanted to change the stage of fight to forest and had no intention of escaping. The two stop their legs near a suitable place.

“Didn’t they come faster than expected. This shows that they also took part in the same enhancement experiment like Kurono, right?”

4 people jump out of from the shade of the trees.

The simultaneous attack of blackened swords and martial arts assault Fiona and Lily.

““— 『Slash』 ””

The oracle field in the child form is inferior to the one in the young girl form. It will be dangerous to take the collision head-on.

“ 『Force Edge』 ”

The light color magical power compresses on the surface of the globe shape barrier covering the body and two glowing swords appear from the compressed light.

It can be easily understood that the swords, which are releasing heat to approximately 1 metre, can burn and cut the person which touches them with more power than the beam.

Lily moves her small arms and the swords follow her hand as if synchronised. The 2 『Force Edge』 swords, slide past the surface of the barrier.

The 『Slash』 released by the two experimental subjects intersect with the 『Force Edge』 and from their impact instead of sparks, white colored bands were scattered.

After a moment of clashing, as if they sensed the endurance limit of the blackened swords, the experimental subjects draw back their swords. Another experimental subject in the rear stops Lily's pursuit with 『Rifle』 and within that amount of time the two experimental subjects which assaulted go back in hiding.

“.....As expected the cooperation through Telepathy is troublesome.”

“I still don't really get it.”

Lily gives a fleeting glance to Fiona standing in rear and there a ridiculously large wall was standing.

All the bullets and martial arts are being repelled with the help of 『Terra Shield』

With this its possible to not see the coordinated attacks of the enemy.

Seeing it, one would want to sigh, but

“Hm? Your defensive magic is really convenient.”

A somewhat crooked smile shows up on Lily's small child face as if she has found the way to comfortably cut their way through the situation.

“Convenient for what?”

“I'll use my divine protection. Don't let any enemy come near me, you can do it, right?”

“.....Leave it to me”

Fiona changed her actions as if she understood the intention of Lily.

She takes out her favorite staff 「Ains Broom」 which was stored inside the dimension in her hat and—

「لحمایة جدارك بدير حجر صخرة منع」

—Starts chanting.

At the same time, Lily fires large amount of light bullets to the places where it seemed like the enemy might be lurking, so that there won't a chance for them to counterattack.

「ك بيرة ت وقف لمنع ال شعلة درعا حرق ث لاثاء」

The black bullets counterattack from the gaps between the light bullets, but it couldn't interrupt the chanting of Fiona as the chant was completed without a single chanting error.

“— 『Terra Armor Shield』

— 『Ignis Armor Shield』 ”

“To be able to make a Dual Shields by yourself. You're pretty good, aren't you”

The moment Lily sends a wide grin to Fiona, the two shields cover her whole body.

The thing that first appeared was a rock cliff.

The 『Tera Arma Shield』 didn't appear as a normal rock wall but it appeared as a 10 metres tall rock tower with Lily as the center.

Immediately following, the whole rock tower got covered with magma like flames.

The thunderously burning flames by it's sweltering heat can stop enemy's advance and burn the attacks to crisp.

The dual shield can generally only be deployed by more than 2 magicians help. The shields made from Fiona's astounding power will protect Lily till the time it's magic runs out.

“And so, till the time Lily-san 'awakens', I'll be everyone's opponent.”

Fiona standing in the rear of the blazing defensive tower with 『Ains Broom』 in her left hand and 『Custom Fire Ball』 in her right.

In front of her are 5 men and women with black hair, black dull eyes and are wearing gary colored robe.

She couldn't make out the position of the other 4 but she has a rough idea that they are waiting for a gap in her stance while hiding in her sides or rear.

The 9 people Lily calls as 'Dolls' really don't have any emotion and don't have even a speck of fear.

They can shoot swords and control the shooting, they have enhanced body, furthermore their telepathic communication through which, it is possible for a perfect, no-mistakes coordinated attack.

“Please try to come out very fast, Lily-san—”

but, even after accurately knowing the ability of enemy, Fiona says as such with her as usual sleepy face and in a calm and composed voice.

“—If you don’t come out fast. I’ll defeat them all alone.”



Chapter 136 – Experimental Subject and Researcher

This was sometime after No. 49 had completed many maneuvering experiments.

“Do you not like No. 49?”

Cyprus was suddenly asked such words by the head of third laboratory and the commander of Holy Soldier Project, Bishop Judas. [ET: Holy Soldier project is in simple words the project of experimenting on humans to make them apostles and bastards.]

“No, something like that.....”

He was wearing the white mask which covered his whole face, the 『Filter Mask』, so his expressions couldn't be seen.

However, Judas continued speaking as if he was convinced of something after seeing through Cyprus's heart.

“There are rare cases for people to retain their consciousness.”

“No. 49 has already lost more than 50 % of his consciousness, it's only a matter of time before that also is completely gone.”

“I'm not saying that. He will keep his consciousness till the last moment his ego vanishes and will not go mad till that time, you don't like that, right?”

Cyprus replies with silence.

He looks below to see the figure of No. 49 going back to his isolation cell after defeating 3 golems.

After fighting to the bitter with golems which boast of power that can crush human in one punch, No. 49 had wounds all over his body.

However, in those black eyes, there was still the light of powerful consciousness and life residing.

(Yeah, you're damn right, I don't like those eyes)

Cyprus was obviously having irritation towards No. 49 who never went insane/mad, and was not depressed even though knowing that an experimental subject has no hope of being saved.

(The things like heart will always break, even resolution, decision too, pride too, in front of 'pain' of reality all those things are bullshit.)

That's why those things are useless, it's not good that you have to keep your consciousness even after reaching here. You asshole foreigners need to cry, scream, go mad, lose all hope and depress before your consciousness is vanished by 『Angel Ring』 .

I came to 『White Sacrament』 for seeing 'that thing'. It ain't good if you don't get broken by the method I want.)

No. 49 by dragging his one leg had already disappeared on the other side of the dark corridor.

“—No. 49 is able to keep his consciousness because simple the 'offerings' of him were good, that also helped to enhance his spirituality.” [ET: Seriously don't understand it.][SK: I think he's talking about the offering used in the very first chapter to summon Kurono.]

He suppressed his true feelings, then replied to Judas while pretending calmness from the position of a single researcher.

“If you're convinced with that, then just think like that.”

And then, Judas left as if he had lost interest.

Cyprus saw off Judas while he bowed his head,

(Stop bullshitting!, damn geezer. 'People who can retain their consciousness', to hell with that, it's just that No. 49 has more endurance power in future he will also break without exception. That's right, he can only bear it right now, but that doesn't mean he is special than other foreigners.)

However, No. 49 was able to keep his consciousness without going mad till the time of completion of ego seal with the use of 『Angel Ring』

.
. .

Three steel bodies drilled with countless bullets fell on the ground while making sounds.

“He blocked with those Light Golems—”

The Bullet Arts fired from mid-air captured the man in it's line of fire.

But the thing that blocked the rain of bullets was neither defensive magic nor martial skill but it was the Light Golem having the appearance of heavy knights

“—This guy is a summoner, huh”

“I’m not damn normal Summoner. I, the great Cyprus, am a High-Summoner. Don’t even think the peashooter will work one me.”

The man called Cyprus, reveals a calm and composed smile.

He summoned 3 Light Golems as a shield in an instant. From that ability it doesn’t seem like what he is saying is a bluff. [ET: POV changed to Kurono at some point.]

Most probably, this guy has a powerful servant which will be enough to kill me.

“Hey, No. 49, bastard, you thought you could kill me?”

“I am not only thinking, but I will kill you.”

I prepare the hatchet in left hand and call back the two blackened swords which I throwed to the two experimental subject behind me.

The two in behind are still not dead, for that reason, I have still the sword arts behind my back as precautions.

But still, the enemy, I, am standing in front of their leader but there is no sign of offense or anything from the two.

“Heh, is that so—Oi!, you both can go to the place with brat and witch.”

The presence of the experimental subject is gone. Looks like they have gone towards Lily and Fiona, but just what is this guy thinking by reducing his allies?

Is he trying to imply that he can defeat me by himself.

“If you can then capture them alive. After I will ‘use them’ later on”(Cyprus)

“You.....”

This is the first time I have ever felt anger to this extent with just some words.

Don’t you speak like a scum-bag towards my friends.

“Ah, What, did you snap? Do you love your women that much, huuh?”

my reply is not words but by sword.

I fire one blackened sword aimed at the glabella of Cyprus.

“haha—”

The fired sword waves and it is sent flying away by the unsheathed sword blade which is glittering with silver glow.

The man draws a longsword with some light residing in it and block the attack of the blackened sword.

He ain't only a summoner, he is also able to use martial skills like Knights.

“—It's good No. 49. This will be needed to break you.”

“What are you talking about?”

“I'm just talking to myself, don't worry about it—”
يـ بـ تـ لـ عـ أـ سـ وـ دـ أـ بـ يـ ضـ أـ سـ وـ د—
”الأ سـ دـ نـ ان تـ أـ كـ لـ الـ سـ حـ رـ الـ مـ قـ دـ سـ الـ ثـ عـ بـ ان

Cyprus starts chanting by raising the white wand on his left hand.

Like always I don't understand the meaning of those words, but going by the flow of chant it looks like he really is a high-summoner.

“Sword Arts, Pierce Through!”

I won't let a guy who uses magic to complete the chant. I fire all 6 blackened swords.

3 from the front, 1 each from both sides and 1 is heading towards the crown of head. All of them are heading towards their targets while leaving a black line in air.

“Haa, too late!”

Cyprus takes the posture of fencing while holding the long sword in right hand.

But the thing that comes from that is not a pierce, but high-speed consecutive slashes.

The six blackened swords arrive at the same time, but the 3 swords in front get sent flying away with the sword fight.

The 3 swords coming from above and left and right dodge the deflected swords with minimum movements as if they are seeing their surroundings.

The two swords of left and right side come back to me but the sword attacking Cyprus from overhead stabs the ground due to him dodging it.

Before I could call back it, it was bisected by a single strike of silver color and lost the black magic power.

The sword technique of Cyprus who fended off the attacks of 6 swords is far surpassing than that of a normal knight.

But, that only is not the reason to why he was able to easily fend off the attack of Sword Arts.

“Is that made by Mithril?!”

“Fool. It should be obvious with a single glance.”

Mithril is a magical metal made with peculiar manufacturing methods and contains the purest of white magical power inside it.

The light inside the sword blade is not a joke. It’s overall weight is like that of a feather but it’s attack is more heavier and stronger than steel.

Only because he is using a sword made by Mithril, that he is able to swing it fastly and easily fend off against blackened swords easily.

The base of my blackened swords is a normal longsword which is coated by my black magical power.

On the contrary, the sword blade of the Mithril sword contains high concentration of purest white magic. There is a lot of difference in the amount of magical power which resides in both weapons.

Black magic simply increases the sharpness and hardness, but I don’t know which sort of effect does the white magic has on swords.

But no matter what, there is no doubt that it is enhancing something. The amount of magical power in a weapon is equally converted into attacking power, that’s why magic weapons are valued highly.

And in the magical weapons, those which give misfortune to the user are ‘Cursed Weapons’, but now matter how you look at it, the weapon of Cyprus is only filled with purest magical power and doesn’t has the least bit of curse or anything.

“Having a wonderful equipment, you son of a

There is a possibility that the Mithril Sword will easily stop my 『Curse Grudge Hatchet 「HaraRetsu」 』 their compatibility is the worst of all.

“OiOi, it will be a problem if you evaluate me with just equipment? I will have to show you the splendid part of my high summoner position—

『Crime Eater』 ”

The effect of the chant from before is finally activated.

From behind Cyprus 4 white colored magical circle about 1 metre big rise up.

Looks like the words and pattern drawn on it has some meaning, but it's impossible for me to decipher it.

And after some seconds, the servant called 『Crime Eater』 appears from inside the magic circles.

SFX: Kishaa-!

It is a big serpent with white colored scales. [ET: Do big-serpents love me!] It's more thicker than my arm and it's overall length is 3 metres. It's smaller when compared to Anaconda, but when a snake of this size does come out in front, the pressure it gives out is no joke.

It is looking at me with red eyes and is waving it's tongue which is split at front. Do I look that tasty?

The animal called snake is able to instill fear in people, but this snake with white body, red eyes like an albino with close remembrance to Sarii is giving me the thought that this guy is a troublesome thing to deal with. However, the strange thing is, the 4 『Crime Eater』 only wrapped around Cyprus with their tails slightly, but are still floating in air.

If they are that big they should have that much amount of weight, right?

Still, Cyprus is standing in a calm and composed manner as if he is not feeling an weight.

“What happened, don't be scared for anymore and come. I am giving you the opportunity to fight the serious me?”

I've got no intention of getting angered on his obvious provocations, but it will be me to attack first as I don't have much time.

I don't know the strength of servant called 『Crime Eater』 , so it will be dangerous for frontal attacks, for the time being,

“Bullet Arts”

I'll wait and see its strength with long-ranged attacks.

The several hundred bullets that appear in an instant are fired with just one swing of the baton.

There is no way to escape from this barrage unless he blocks like before and leaps out of the range of fire.

Cyprus is still smiling and shows no signs of landing on ground.
So he chose defense, the moment I thought that all the bullet arts disappeared.

“.....What?”

They didn’t waver, or get repelled, but simply disappeared. Yeah, the several hundred bullets vanished in thin air before reaching Cyprus. Neither did he move nor the snakes too.

What was it, what is happening? Complete Magic Nullification? Does that technique exist?

“Hey, come on fast No. 49”

“Wh—Sword Arts”

Instead of thinking of thinking, it’s better to attack right now.

I throw the 2 blackened swords and once again fire the bullet arts.

Cyprus is still standing without any signs of moving, but,

SFX: Sha!

This time the snakes moved.

The 2 snakes move as if they are his new arms and sink their teeths in the two blackened swords coming at him.

The sound of metal resounds and at the same time the black magic covering the sword blade is nullified as if it evaporated.

The snakes spit out the wreckage of the smashed swords with an attitude saying ‘Don’t make us eat this crap.’

By the time they are doing that, the barrage of bullets are once again vanished after reaching a certain distance near Cyprus.

“I see, I now understand it—”

I drop the baton down and stop the rapid-fire of bullet arts.

I understood that it’d be useless to use it any longer.

“—So the ability of those snakes is to drain black magical energy, right?”

“As expected, even an idiot could understand that much! But, just because you understand doesn’t mean you can do anything about it, do you understand that as well Eeh No. 49??”

I finally understood why this guy had been acting so confidently in front of me.

Since he was a researcher as well, he should know that I can only use black magic only.

Then by draining black magical energy, if he could nullify black magic attacks, I would be nothing more than a slightly enhanced human.

The fact that I was the one who went to attack him was a mistake from the very start, but I can't switch with Fiona or Lily now.

Fuck, as expected of a researcher, he has all the things needed to subdue a rampaging experiment eh?

"Since I ran away, you hurriedly prepared that to catch me, is it?"

"That's right. The moment I found you, I didn't think I'll be able to capture you peacefully but I still didn't actually expect to use these! Hiyahaha"

How long is this bastard going to play around.

But still, it'll be difficult to defeat him now that my black magic is sealed.

Those snakes weren't just a shield against black magic, but could also normally attack and bite as well. They're dangerous even without the draining effect.

In the worst case, They might be able to even use some white magic as well.

On top of it, Cyprus has a mithril sword as well and is skilled with it too.

"This is bad, I can't really find a way to win. What should I do?—"



Chapter 137 – Fairy and Witch (2)

Inside the forest with a firing tower a new flame arose.

“— 『Ignis Kris Sagita』 ”

The intermediate level offensive spell 『Ignis Kris Sagita』 fired by Fiona is activated 3 times faster than normal due to shortening the spell (TN: a.k.a short spell)

Short Spell is the high-class technique of shortening the normal needed chanting spell of any magic. As a matter of course, the shortened part will also have less power than the complete chant.

If 『Ignis Kris Sagita』 is fired normally by Fiona it would make a flaming whirlwind of 20 metres height but with short spell it is reduced to just a little over 10 metres.

However, Fiona is suppressing about 40% of the reduction rate of Short Spell which is the technique to reduce the power of a spell below 50%. The proof of it can be seen by seeing her magic.

““— 『Shield』 ””

Though Fiona’s spell power is 60% of her normal power but the spell is of her specialised attribute, so the intermediate spell contains the power of high level spell. This attack can even make the experimental subjects with enhanced bodies to be degraded in pitiable state.

Both of them evade the extreme sweltering heat to the maximum extent possible and block the rest with the help of a dual shield.

Though dual shield won’t activate unless their chanting is completed at the same time, but it’s not much difficult for the experimental subjects to do it because of telepathy transmission.

Two black shields rise and start defending against the hell-fire, at the same time the two experimental subjects start their counter-attack.

““ 『Rifle』 ””

The experimental subjects have already inspected that Fiona’s black robe is able to completely block the attacks of low-powered 『BuckShot』 and so they only fire at her using 『Rifle』 .

The black bullets fly through the trees. Suddenly, several 『Ignis Sagita』 in

the shape of a fire globe come flying in from the opposite side of Fiona, as if intersecting with the bullets.

Fiona was standing right behind the attack, so the experimental subjects had predicted that she has good evasion or defense left. But in reality, the attack not only defended her but also counterattacked.

“—!”

Though it is unexpected action, but the two quickly jump to the left and right and dodge the fireballs.

Fiona is looking at their movements, but suddenly turns her sight to the place from where three presences are approaching at high speed.

“『Terra Blast』 ”

Fiona strikes the 『Terra Shield』 in front of her with a clunk, which she made for protection against two experimental subjects who attacked her with 『Rifle』 .

The lower level ranged attack 『Terra Blast』 uses the rocks in surrounding as bullets and shoots the lump of rocks in the surroundings.

The rock bullets get thrown towards the place with the presence of 3 experimental subjects, but due to Fiona's imperfect magic control the rocks are also thrown in places with no relevance to those three.

The Dual Shield made for Lily is also included in its targets. Some rock bullets strike severely against the tower of flame.

(Can't you fight by making less noise?)

Lily's complaints run into Fiona's head.

“I think that I'm fighting by making so less noise that even I'm surprised.”

It's not a joke. Fiona herself is believing that she herself is fighting really good that she can praise herself later.

That is purely because of her wanting to show her good side in front of her companions. As for, if the result is really good or not, then,

(Stop joking around. It's so noisy that one would undoubtedly make mistake in Life Drain if it wasn't for me.)

Just as Lily says, the fight that is happening is really noisy.

In truth, Lily after sensing the fighting going outside of shield, consented as to why Fiona was taken out from parties till now.

Fiona's fighting style is like that of a rogue dragon just firing extremely powerful magic in all directions. Unless someone excels in magic or has tough body like Kurono, no can form a party with her.

But, that was the only thing that allowed Lily to let Fiona enter their, the part of her and Kurono.

"Lily-san are you drawing the magic circle for 『Life Drain』 here, right now?"

I think you have some scrolls left"

(I have 1 left. I always save one or two for emergencies.)

"Isn't that 'emergency' right now?"

from above the tree, from the tree shadows, from the rear and from all and every blind spots, blackened swords come flying at Fiona.

(Impossible, something of this level. Isn't this a wonderful event with crisis coming in?)

"— 『Air Walker』 "

Just at the time Lily's carefree comment resounds, Fiona starts to evade the line of fire of swords.

『Air Walker』 that she is using is not magic but is a martial skill.

One mouth is not enough for Fiona's talent. She can use Short Spell with high proficiency, uses two-staff-style of 『Ainz Broom』 and 『Custom Fire Ball』 along with activating boost using only magic.

Hence, it's only natural Fiona chose for an martial skill which can only be activated by her talents.

Although, martial skills including evasion or things like movements are used mostly by classes of Swordsmen or Warriors. A Magician class person can't just easily get it.

But Fiona was using that martial skill as if natural. Martial skills use different principles than magic in controlling the magical power in body.

『Air Walker』 increases the speed of the person. Fiona enhanced the leg strength and is running so fast that one will definitely mistake it for teleportation.

(Hmm, you can even use martial skills. Looks like witches learn other things than magic too.)

“If I couldn’t do something easy as this, I wouldn’t have graduated.”

She is slipping past the blackened swords easily and quickly in his forest with bad footing.

Along with that, she is checking the experimental subjects to launch an attack with 『Custom Fire Ball』

(Schools seems like a hassle. So then, how will one get the so-called ‘graduation’?)

“You’re right. Well the thing which was difficult for me was——لا طلاق ت بادل
”مشد تعلا ال لهب واسع نطاق على ال نار

She senses a concentration of a powerful magic from the front.

And predicts, that it must be 『Rifle』 with increased power with the help of chant.

“Killing a two-headed salamander—— 『Ignis Over Blast』 ”

Rather than defensive magic, she chooses the attack magic with large fire area for burning the attack of enemy to a crisp.

The 『Ignis Over Blast』 burns and blocks the surroundings of Fiona with blazing fire, looking at it’s firepower one wouldn’t say it used a Short Spell.
(I see, Salamander, seems like ‘everyone’ had the same experience)

“You’re right. The subjugation of Salamander is a famous project performed as class project.”

(And, you completed it alone)

“It was supposed to be mandatory for everybody in the class to participate, but for some reason they shunned me out.”

While seeing the flame released by her magic, she recalls a bitter memory of her running from the breath attack from a two-head firedrake.

“I miraculously completed it, , though, I don’t want to do it again in my life.”
(Only I haven’t fought with a salamander. I want to go and subjugate it at least once?)

The flames calm down and in Fiona’s sight once again the green forest, no, the carbonised trees are seen.

Looks like enemy’s 『Rifle』 wasn’t able to cross 『Ignis Over Blast』 and come near Fiona.

“Do you mean going together?”

(Yeah, together)

Without having any presences coming near, Fiona guesses whether they are devoting themselves to healing because they got hurt.

Though it's a great chance when the opponent is healing themselves, but Fiona didn't pursue them.

That is because her work was stalling, she has no reason to defeat them.

"You're right.....If we three are going together, then maybe I can come along"

(I thought you'd say that. well then, let's end our conversation now---)

An, Fiona now understood that she doesn't need to stall them anymore.

That's right, the outcome is already decided.

"--- 『Life Drain』 "

That is because the preparations for Lily's DP are already set.

"Nh---"

The strong suction of life energy rises up just like a tempest.

Due to that the place with the extreme near Lily is the dual shields which start to collapse.

The the heat of the magic flames is snatched and it vanishes. The rock lose their harness and the magical power inserted in it completely and the tower collapses after the rocks become brittle.

The only thing left are the fragments of the rock which constructed the tower.

Standing on top of the rumble is a fairy clad in mysterious emerald colored light.

She is stealing the magical power in surrounding as if it is all her's. The life energy of everything is being snatched away without any mercy, hesitation, restraint or anything. It is just greedily expanding its area of effect.

"The effect does seem fit for a forbidden art"

Fiona murmurs in admiration while seeing the scene of every living thing dying and withering with Lily as the center.

As Fiona is a witch, so her accomplishments in magic must be big that's why she has no trouble in preserving her magical power from being sucked out. Even the things with magical resistance will be able to resist their energy

from being snatched.(TN: Magical Power, life energy and every power = Energy...| I can't just type every word every time after all,this ain't Japanese but is English.)

That might be the same for experimental subjects which can use black magic. Even if they have a bit of their magical power snatched but it won't be able to deal damage to them which is convenient to Fiona and Lily. However, the common flora and fauna won't have their way of life like them.

They will without exception, have their every energy sucked out and will only die.

"Well then, the preparations all done."

Lily after sucking the energy of everything within 50 metres of radius,

"I can at last kill these dolls, who are bothering Kurono"

revealed a pretty smile on her lovely small face.

"Pure of heart and beautiful, Her Majesty the Queen 『Iris』 "

Fiona silently puts her two wands back in her hat while thinking that her role is now over.

Chapter 138 – Black Mage vs. Summoner (1)

The sword glowing of silver color assaults Kurono as if cutting through darkness.

The feeling of scorching heat starts to spread in the shape of character of one (TN: Horizontal slash like (—)), though the wound is shallow, but the blade has definitely cut him.

“—”

If that attack was a martial skill, he would've died.

The Mithril Blade easily cuts through the black magic robe a.k.a 『Baphomet's Embrace』 which increases the defensive power of the wearer.

Even if it was a swing of sword, if he took it head-on it would've had become a fatal wound. Kurono evaded with paper-thin difference and somehow runs away from Cyprus's slashing attacks.

“Ora! What happened No. 49. Weren't you gonna—”

4 strong arms attack Kurono who somehow was standing without breaking his stance even after getting a cut near his chest.

“—Kill me??”

They were not arms but 4 『Crime Eater』

The head of snake covered with hard white colored scales capable of stealing the black magic head towards Kurono at high-speed. The impact of the heads easily surpasses the impact of that of a heavy-weight boxer.

“Ku!”

He was able to repel 2 of them with his 『Cursed Grudge Hatchet 「HaraRetsu」 』, but was unable to fend off other 2 which land a strike at him with their heads.

Though Kurono's body weight was far surpassing than that of a normal adult male, his enhanced body and height were also a factor in it, but the head-but of the white big-serpents were able to send him back flying back.

“.....U, It hurts”

To not show any unguarded moment, he stood back while taking a defence stance.

“Hehe, you’re still full of energy, so then why don’t have another go with higher difficulty”

“Ha, so you were holding back, huh”

With the action of calling back the 2 『Crime Eater』 the black magical power inside the 『Cure Grudge Hatchet 「HaraRetsu」 』 was sucked out. Kurono once again returned the hatchet back to the blackened state by pouring his magical power inside.

“If you couldn’t do that it would be boring! From the time I came to Pandora(here), I had been struck with boredom, but it’s not good to not have fun when it’s fun time.”

In good words to explain Cyprus’s dominance would be, he was playing with Kurono.

If the 『Crime Eater』 try not to head-butt, but bite or wrap him to seal his movements, then later Kurono would automatically become disabled after having black magical power sucked out.

And it will be end for him if Cyprus tried to stab him while his movement was restricted, Kurono, who had been defending understood that much.

On the other hand, Cyprus knows his own and his servant’s abilities completely, furthermore,

(We, ‘Creators’ know more about your body than you yourself.)

Cyprus even knows the abilities of his enemy, Kurono.

(No. 49 escaped during the end of the first phase of Holy Soldier Project, and so that bastard can’t use any black magic other than instinctively nor can he learn other magics.)

Cyprus understood the fact that 『Foreigners』 which become the experimental subjects are inhabitants of another world.

And the fact that the worlds from where foreigners were called from have no relation to magic was already confirmed.

Hence, it was an established theory that foreigners have zero ability in learning magic by themselves other than the ‘power’ given by them.

(After all, 『Trans Word』 is always activated and it translates the letters and spoken words. There is no way he can actually learn the real language.)

[ET: Trans Word = Translation of Words. I need that thing in my mind so I can TL almost every language of World.]

The fatal disadvantage in not being able to learn various magic like Model magic et cetera was that.

The magic won't activate unless one knows the meaning of the spell and the words written it. Even if one tried to mimic the pronunciation or writing of the spell, the magic won't start ever.

In the first place, it was even impossible for Kurono to mimic the pronunciation or writing of spell, because the language of the world was replaced with Japanese from the start it entered his ears.

“—Bullet Arts”

The cornered Kurono fired Bullet Arts which Cyprus had seen even in experiment and actual practice.

“I'm saying this is useless, you dimwit!”

The Bullet Arts though had the efficiency same to that of a real bullet, but to Cyprus who controlled the 『Crime Eater』 it wasn't even a threat of a child throwing pebble at him.

Cyprus attacks straightly without having any need for defence or evasion. And as if natural the bullets vanish in thin air before reaching the enemy as if putting a drop of water on a hot stone.

But, Kurono surely saw that the bullets reached Cyprus more than before because he poured twice the amount of magical power than before.

“『Lux Slash』 ”

“KuroNagi!”

The trajectory of white and black intersected.

The remains of magical power of both black and white magic scattered due to the blades exchanging blows.

Kurono took a step back because of the difference in compatibility.

Without a moment's delay, the 4 big serpent assaulted Kurono with a terrifying straight head-butt(Punch).

“Ku, Shield”

He deployed defensive magic, but regrets the moment because it was a bad move.

But, it's truth that he had no other way of defending.

Its result,

SFX: Shaaaaa-!

The 4 head pierce through the shield as if it wasn't there and Kurono takes four heavy strikes on his body.

He took a impact very strong that it might have taken his consciousness.

Then Kurono saw from the side of his vision that the place of snake which touched the Shield deployed by him were sucking his black magic form him.

"Gaha, Geho....."

The once again blown away Kurono, somehow took defensive stance but was unable to stand right up immediately.

And, Cyprus, who didn't had any intention of ending the one-sided fight waited for Kurono to stand back up.

(Don't lose confidence with just this much No. 49. You're the great masochist, who actually completed the human experiments while retaining sanity after all. This much won't mean any shit to you.)

Kurono stood back up while gripping the hatchet with his left hand pushed forward.

In his eyes, the peculiar pair of black eyes, the fighting spirit still hadn't wavered even after knowing the absolute affinity difference.

(That's right, those shitty conceited eyes!

Right now I'm thanking god with my whole heart. After I get a chance to instill insanity and despair in you, in those unyielding-spirited eyes of yours!!)

Cyprus didn't knew that he was laughing, but even if he knew there is no reason for him to stop laughing.

(The 'Real Thing' comes later, beating the hell out of you and bringing you back is only opening performance, but I will have fun, until you understand that no matter how you struggle, you won't be able to defeat me ever)

Seeing Kurono poise the sword with both hands, Cyprus too poised the sword a second later.

(There is no introduction to martial skills in the first phase of experiments. The 『KuroNagi』 No.49 is using is the curse of that hatchet.

He might be able to kill scum around here and there with the power and weapon ability, but, hmph, that technique ain't much to me who has learned martial skills and equipped with a 『Mithril Sword』).

While pushing back the sadism rising from the bottom of heart, Cyprus inspected the weapon that Kurono acquired after the escape.

(It must be good luck that he got a baton for black magic use, but that level of thing won't give much firepower.

He knows that the strongest he has right now is only that hatchet.

It's clear that you don't have any other weapon hidden, after all we have the skill to see through you black magician's dimension.

or rather you don't even have a sword with 『Auto-Killer』 function. Hmph, showing-off against some damn Crusaders. Good work No. 49)

If Kurono had an artifact class weapon or an item, then counter-attacking would have possible.

However, there was no way he had anything like that, that was confirmed with 100% confidence after Cyprus inspected through the 『Shadow Gate』 of Kurono with 『Dimension Search』 .

(The only reliable thing at the end is your own power.

But, your black magic, physical ability too, magical power amount too and the amount you would have grown after escape are already predicted by us, it's impossible for you to win)

Cyprus had always been pursuing human experiments from the time Kurono was brought in this world and made in an experimental subject.

Them, researchers, have the possession of all data about the status of Kurono showing how much he had grown or his growth rate and things like that which even Kurono himself doesn't know.

If one looks at that magic, it was clear that there was no way to enlarge the magical quantity than what was provided to him.

If the magical quantity and growth-rate was seen as a magician then No. 49 had highest potential, but no matter how high it was, it would be completely empty with just 2 『Crime Eater』 .

And considering the fact that he hadn't learnt any other magic, then in terms of magic Kurono's growth cannot be estimated more than what he had already learned before.

Also, it was hard to think that there would have been rise in Kurono's physical ability along with him learning martial skills.

The strong factors in the current situation would be Lily and Fiona against whom the experimental subjects were having hard time.

Cyprus was able to know the war situation due to periodic telepathic transmission.

However, he judged that they would be stall both Fiona and Lily till the time he teased Kurono to his heart's content and captured Kurono.

Everything was within his prediction, no irregularity in his plans.

"You're all idiots with no imaginative power, you are also the same No. 49.

You still think you can kill me , right!?"

Kurono had wounds all over his body.

Due to the draining of black magic, even if he closed his wounds with black magic, the magic will get drained and result would be blood loss.

It was obvious that he had endurance but it was obvious that it would also get exhausted if the fight would continue like this.

However,

"Yeah, of course, How can I let a shitty ass-hole scumbag—"

Kurono smiled.

Cyprus showed him a deadly stare filled with irritation in his eyes.

"—keep on living in this world!"

Chapter 139 – The Black Mage vs. Summoner (2)

“Yeah, how can I let a shitty ass-hole scumbag like you living in this world?”
Finally, I can finally see the chance of winning.

Cyprus takes stance while thinking my words are just a bluff and is still smiling faintly with disgust.

I grasp the 『Cursed Grudge Hatchet 「HaraRetsu」 』 in my right hand tightly, and commence the attack having the resolve that I will only get one chance for it.

“Here I go—”

I run straight towards him. That guy is completely underestimating me, and so he definitely won't use long-ranged attacks.

Most probably he doesn't have any other way to attack other than sword or snakes, but no matter what, that guy has no intention to thwart my approach and will wait until I get recover my posture. He is giving me excessive service.

Thanks to that, I am able to make a plan to surely kill him.

“— 『Anchor Hand』 ”

Normally, this black magic is used for moving up and down on cliffs and walls.

I don't use it mostly even when it is needed, but this time I pour the most of the black magical power in the black wire and as if rivaling 『Crime Eater』 the 『Anchor Hand』 became of the same width and length as that of the snakes.

I send the 4 log-like wire towards the 4 snakes who are licking their lips to seal their movements.

“Ha, just when I think what you were about to do, you go for such a foolish method.”

Even if he has sensed my intention, he still sends his 4 snakes against my 4 『Anchor Hand』 as if they aren't a threat to him.

When both of their distance is approximately 3 metres apart. The black and white intertwined and starts their struggle for supremacy.

The tip of the wire, originally have a fishing hook sort of end, but for grabbing the head of snakes, I have made 3 fingers on each of their ends. On the other hand, 『Crime Eater』 bites at the 4 wires made from black magic to eat them.

“It is directly connected to your body. At this rate your magical power inside the body will also be sucked.”

“Don’t underestimate—”

Just as Cyprus said, I can feel my magical power being drained through 『Anchor Hand』

If I cancel 『Anchor Hand』 right now then I can maybe be safe from the drain caused by 『Crime Eater』

But then there will be no meaning then. I bear the pain of my magic power being drained out every second while clenching my teeth and try to maintain the shape of wires trying to capture the snakes.

“—my magical power!”

I take one more step forward.

“OiOi, don’t do boring things like falling down due to magical power exhaustion”

I reach the distance where both of our swords can reach each other and I swing my hatchet towards Cyprus who has a complaining face as if saying joy-destroyer.

“KuroNagiiiiii!”

“Lux Slash—”

SFX: Gakiin!

The moment the two blades come in contact, 『Cursed Grudge Hatchet 「HaraRetsu」 』 in my right hand easily slips past and flies towards the horizon.

“—Ah?”

My hatchet getting flicked is not a point which Cyprus would think as strange.

But, no matter how much he sees the victory, he wouldn’t have felt the power in my strike that should have been there.

It is only natural, after all I never activated the martial skill 『KuroNagi』 , just swung the hatched nothing more.

“I got you—”

I clench fist with my right hand, and my left hand which was originally empty,

“—Blackening”

Shakes off the sword with power beyond my control and I grasp the Mithril Blade tightly.

The sharp edge of blade cuts my palm and blood starts to flow, but as if the blood dropped on the blade is covering the blade, the blade soon enough starts to corrode due to my black magic.

“Ku, Bastard—”

Cyprus shouts out in an impatient voice, but it’s already too late.

Your boastful Mithril Sword is now mine.

“Go flying away!”

In an instant black magic covers the white blade and blackening is complete. I start the throwing action which I used instinctively.

“Uooo!?”

Understanding my actions, Cyprus tries to grasp the hilt of sword tightly, but it slips through without any resistance and he flies towards the horizon. At very close range, the sword is unneeded, it will be good if I just take the sword. I don’t have the confidence to pull off Sword Arts in this situation, so for the time being I put my whole power in throwing him away.

In the meantime, in my clenched right hand fist concentrates another sort of black magic.

Controlling 4 extra-large 『Anchor Hand』 and Blackening along with 1 more magic is really difficult,

“Pile—”

But, if it’s this most simple black magic that I learned at first, then there is no difficulty in activating it.

“Bunkerrrrrrrr!!”

The Black Magical Power turns into a spiral of destruction and starts swirling around my fist which I punch towards the face of Cyprus.

“Kuo—”

Neither having a way of evading or defending, my fist cleanly hits in the middle of his face.

But, I didn't feel the resistance I should have felt when piercing through someone's head and pulverising his brains. It's hard. As if I had just struck a shield.

“U, oooo.....”

Even so, after taking a clean heat, his nose his crushed and he staggers while his nose is bleeding.

I pay attention to the cross hanging on the chest of the ugly Cyprus as it starts releasing magic light.

I see, so it's a magic item with defensive magic.

Shall I destroy it or cancel it, no, I only have my body now, so

“Breakkkkk!”

I have no other choice than to beat this bastard till he is disabled to move.

“Guu, Haa—”

I fiercely attack Cyprus who is reflexively trying to gain distance.

I can't let him run here so I throw Cyprus down on the road with full force.

And quickly secure the mount position as if sitting on a horse.

At this point of time 『Crime Eater』 has eaten near half of 『Anchor Hand』 .

There is not much time left to hold off the snakes. If the situation changes here, then this time I definitely won't have a chance to to reverse it.

“Oraa!”

I earnestly punch with my fist against the shield deployed by the cross.

“Gaha—-how can , still move uu—-”

I keep beating his face with my fist which is filled with power due to magic and can even break steel right now.

Pierce, Just pierce through this shield!

“Even after—-exhausting the magic.....”

Why are you so surprised?

Surely, 『Crime Eater』 has the ability to eat the black magical power but it can only drain a fixed amount of it in a short time.

It it has the ability to completely eat the black magic when it touches it, then it wouldn't had shown any signs of being extinguished from the point it touched at the time of smashing the 2 blackened swords or at the time or piercing the shield.

A normal Bullet Arts would vanish upon reaching a certain distance but the Bullet Arts with double magic power would proceed 30 cm more than normal.

I don't know what the maximum amount of magical power 『Crime Eater』 can eat. But, if it is fixed for a period then I only have to beat the summoner before my magical power is exhausted.

And to my luck, this guy didn't pay heed to my approach.

It would have been better if you just spectated by acting as a summoner and letting your servant do all work, but it's already too late to regret, you shitty scumbag asshole.

"Oraaa!"

The sound of the invisible shield cracking reached my ears.

I can do it, there is still time left.

"Come on! Come on!"

I punch, punch and keep on punching. Though my fists are enhanced by magic, they are still getting injuries due to the recoil of punching the shield.

So what, I can break his shield in a little more time, this pain is nothing.

"Impossible——this is——"

"Come onnnnnnnn!!!"

I punch with my bloodied fist.

SFX: Gashaaa! (Sound of shield breaking)

And finally, the shield breaks apart.

The moment it is destroyed, the cross too is smashed in pieces and lose its defensive power.

"!? H-hey, Wai——"

"Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!" (Kurono)

I raise my right fist, the last attack.

However, at that moment, a sharp pain runs through my right hand.

"Guaa! damnit——"

I can't swing my fist, after all the fangs of white big-serpent are biting my right hand.

Crap, so finally my magical power exhausted and 『Anchor Hand』 is forcibly cancelled.

“—Damn it!”

The snakes rush at me after losing their prevention object.

My last weapon, left fist, is also restricted to move by one big serpent.

“Ha,Ha.....Hyaaaahahahahahaha! It's too bad No. 49!”

2 snakes stop the movements of my arms and the rest two are biting near my abdomen.

The feeling of my last amount of black magic getting sucked out is more painful than the pain of fangs inside my stomach.

It's as if my life force is getting sucked out, I can't put any power in my body and consciousness also starts to flicker.

“Gu, Aaa.....”

“Bastard frightening me, you have more magical amount than predicted, really, you are an irritating and annoying bastard!”

Cyprus punches at my cheeks to repay the gift from before.

But, because he is still pinned down his fist lacked force so I couldn't feel much pain. I can understand that he had punched me but it's pain is being suppressed by the pain of both arms and both sides of abdomen.

“Damn it, Damn it, Playing with me, I don't give a damn shit about mission. I am going to rape your women here and then later I will kill you!”

“Stop speaking—-”

My no-power-left body floats a bit and Cyprus struggles to stand from his current position.

If he gets up away right here, then my attacks won't reach him.

But, thinking that is useless.

After all, this is my last attack.

I thought this was my end, but thanks to his foul-mouthed provocation, I am able to imagine the pain of losing Fiona and Lily.

Thanks to that, I can muster my last will power to kill you, Thank you. You were truly a shitty asshole scumbag till the last moment.

“Stop speakinggggggggggggggggggg!”

And, I bite at Cyprus’s windpipe area.

“Wha—-”

I can kill you like the method your prideful snakes use. Though it might be childish and primitive, but I have enhanced strong teeth, so I can put sufficient power to tear his windpipe.

“oooOOooAAA”A”AAAAAA!? S-Stop it OooOOOaaaaAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!!!!”

Thanks to you guys enhancing every nook and corner of my body even my jaws have the power of an average animal.

There is not any hard scales, so I can tear and devour the windpipe of a human with soft skin easily.

“—-!!”

While reaching the middle section of throat and neck, I keep on biting and devouring the blood vessels and meat inside there. [ET: Ghoul anyone? of Tokyo Ghoul]

Inside my mouth is iron like taste, the taste of human.

The blood gushing out covers my sight.

“H-Ha—-Gaha.....Haha.....”

Cyprus desperately tries to stop the spurt of blood with his both hands that seems like he is trying to wring himself to death.

In his wide opened eyes, I am not even reflected.

His face is that of a human tightly clinging on his last remnants of life while being scared of the approaching footsteps of Death.

“Crap.....My consciousness is.....”(Kurono)

Looks like I can’t see his last ugliest moments.

All the power has already left my body, I can no longer feel the pain from my both arms and sides of abdomen.

“Ah—-”

Slowly, I fall while facing upwards.

I feel a soft and warm feeling of something on my back.

Within my flickering consciousness and hazy vision came the smile of the goddess of victory.

“—-Lily”

“You’ve worked hard. Leave the rest to me and sleep”

I try to say something to Lily who is in her young girl form, but my lips only trembled a bit.

“Good night, Kurono” [ET: It’s only noon though, Damn big volume and day]



Chapter 140 - Tell Me

Kurono fainted with a peaceful looking expression but his whole body had become crimson red from the large amounts of blood flowing from the wounds.

The method of killing someone by biting off their wind pipe made Kurono look like a mad serial killer but,

“fu,fufufufu you were too cool Kurono!!”

For Lily, the blood-stained Kurono looked more glamorous than a prince on a white horse.

“Oh how lovely! Superb! *chuu* *chuu*”

Using the fact that he was fainted, Lily gave kisses on his cheek.

“Lily-san, I think you should heal Kurono-san now or we’ll be too late you know?”(Fiona)

Maybe she didn’t think much of Lily’s actions or was maybe too amazed by it, or maybe she was jealous, Fiona came to interrupt Lily with her usual unreadable expression.

This situation where two men were lying in the middle of the road like corpses along with 4 corpses of snakes wasn’t exactly suitable for a romantic kiss scene.

Cyprus’ servants, the [Crime Eaters] were lying dead, not because Cyprus had fallen but because Lily had simply shot them down.

Although, neither Cyprus nor Kurono knew just when Lily had done something like that.

“—n, I guess that’s true.”(lily)

As if she was used to it, Lily picked up Kurono’s body easily.

“It’s really unfortunate but I’ll have to leave Kurono’s treatment to you. You still have the [Fairy’s miracle drug] remaining right?”(lily)

“I don’t mind but, is that fine?”(Fiona)

“It’s fine, I need to——”

In Lily’s line of sight was Cyprus trying to stop the blood flow from his neck as he fainted.

He was on the verge of death but he was still alive.

“——hear a lot of things from him.”

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As he woke up, Cyprus realized that he was still alive.

“ha, haha——”

He ended up laughing with delight on this miracle.

(“That’s right! I, I am not someone who would die here!”)

Yes, there was no way he could die like that.

After all, there has been nothing that hasn’t gone as he wished till now in his whole life.

Good looks and high physical abilities, having talent in both the sword and magic, and having rich parents, he was a born elite. He was different from others, a man truly loved by god.

Someone like him wouldn’t die so pitifully while fighting against an escaped experimental body.

“Oh, so you’re finally awake Mr. Scumbag?”

The moment he was called ‘scum’ by a voice as sweet as a little bird, Cyprus once again brought his consciousness back to reality from his thoughts.

“——Ah?”

He finally understood his situation then.

Among the lush green tress, a gentle early summer wind caressed his cheek with the sound of rustling of the branches.

Apparently he was sitting with his hands tied back and legs stretched forwards. And judging by the sunlight coming from between the gaps in the leaves, it was still daytime.

“There are a lot of things I want to know from you. It’d be nice if you answered them all honestly.”

In front of him stood a beauty with platinum blonde hair and emerald green eyes.

“You bitch!!”

She was a beauty that would have normally made him fill with the desire to make her his own woman but Cyprus hadn’t forgotten his current situation.

(“No. 49’s woman, that fairy who suddenly turned into a brat!.”)

For some reason, she was supposed to be in a child like form but maybe by using some kind of magic, she returned back to her original girl form.

“You shouldn’t make such a loud noise. Or have you forgotten the condition of your throat already?”

“Tch.....”

In his mind the figure of the truly devil like no.49 biting off his throat appeared.

It should have been a fatal blow but since quick healing had been done, it’ll still take some time to heal completely. Cyprus who was well versed with magic ascertained the condition of his injury and healing.

If we were to make a loud noise, the wound might open again and start bleeding profusely.

“Well, even if you don’t talk, it won’t really trouble me though.”

(“Shit, underestimating me this bitch——”)

He was alive but had become a prisoner. He started thinking about what to do but,

“After all, I only have to listen directly to your ‘heart/mind’.”(lily)

With a girlish smile, a shining white needle appeared in front of Cyprus and he stopped thinking.

Starting from the injections in the facility, he had seen a lot of needles but the one in front of him was bigger and thicker than any of those. It was more like a skewer or a thin stake.

Probably it had been made by her magic and by her words he understood what she was about to do to him.

“You people have done the same thing, it’s only obvious that you’ll realize my intentions, ufufufu.”(lily)

As she twisted the needle as if she was having fun, the girl raised her hand overhead.

What appeared was the same structure that appeared from an [Angel Ring] that could directly interfere with one’s thoughts.

“Now then, first, let’s start with your name.”

“Stop—“

As he tried to speak the words to stop, the girl gave a dazzling smile and brought down the needle while accelerating it with magic.

Dozu—(sound of stabbing)

Cyprus heard such a dull sound inside his head.

“Ah....Oooaah.....”

The giant needle that stabbed into his head turned and scraped at his cranium and aimed for his ‘mind’.

Surprisingly, he felt no pain but Cyprus knew what was happening to him as his hair stood on its end as his brain was being violated.

“ooo.....stop.....stop...st.....”

While still smiling enjoyably, the girl put more force in it.

Finally, the needle completely pierced through his skull and encroached till the delicate part of his brains.

“—Cyprus Vermani, Oh, you were quite the rich guy. How enviable, I also want to live with Kurono in such a big mansion.”

Someone who possesses strong telepathic powers can directly ‘touch’ and draw out any and all information from the brain.

Even a single human possesses massive amounts of information in their head. To draw out the required data, its best to question them straight and then read their minds to know the answers.

“I don’t really care about your personal info though. What I want to know is what kind of connection do ‘you people’ have with Kurono. How did you ‘summon’ him to this world? What did you want Kurono to do? What did you do to Kurono? What did——-“

Something ‘else’ ran about inside his head and gave rise to a fearsome amount discomfort.

Violently, forcibly, inside his head, inside his mind, every time that ‘something’ moved about, some part of his memories got destroyed.

All of that was info she did not need after all. Everything other than info connected to No.49 was unneeded, useless, trash, garbage, and there was no value in leaving such info inside his head.

“C’mon, tell me, more, more about Kurono!!”

Once again a turbulent sound resounded inside his head, the sound of his cranium being destroyed, the sound of having his brains pierced. The needles being inserted in his head kept on increasing. 2, 3 and more.

All he knew was that ‘something’ was raping his mind vigorously and gave birth to absolute despair that was increasing like surging waves.

“I want to know more about Kurono. I want to know each and everything about Kurono! That’s why, tell me everything about Kurono that even Kurono himself doesn’t know!!”(lily)

The girls voice didn’t reach Cyprus’ ears any longer.

His eyes turned white and he became a cripple as drool flowed from his open mouth. There was no way he could understand words in such a situation.

“Aah, I know! I now know more about Kurono! I can learn more about Kurono!!”

Maybe she realized that he wasn't responding to words any more, using her telepathy in its original form to communicate directly with one's mind, she sent direct messages to Cyprus' brain.

“Doing such cruel things to Kurono, I really cannot forgive you. I'll completely and thoroughly make you suffer and then kill you.”

In his head, a cruel, genuine killing intent was carved.

As a replacement for his destroyed memories, killing intent, hostility, disdain, abuse, scorn—all sorts negative emotions were crammed inside his head.

Cyprus finally understood that his own ego, his own personality was being destroyed right now.

(“aa.....so this is whathaving your mind broken feels like.....”)

The only thing left to him was,

(“ Oh God.....save me.....”)

To pray to his God for salvation that would be never given to him.

(“Please...save me....save—-“)

“ahahaha, that's it, keep on praying to your god to preserve your mind. After all, the true suffering and pain will start from here onwards. The despair you love so much, I'll make you fully taste it as well, 'kay?”

Chapter 141 - Unlock

“—Uh!?”

I jumped up the moment my consciousness came back.

I had almost tied my battle with Cyprus and I feel like I saw Lily's face in the end.....no, before that let's confirm the situation.

In front of me was the highway leading to the faraway Gallahad Mountain ranges and the black figure beside me was,

“How did it go, Fiona?”(kuroono)

“It's all fine. Everything's over.”

The witch gave the answer with her usual expressionless face.

Everything's over, that means for the time being, the danger should have receded. I feel relieved.

“How long was I asleep?”(kuroono)

“Around 30 mins. Just now, the last of the light golems was defeated and the enemy force has been annihilated.”

As I looked around, the remains of the light golems, who wore the just-for-show armour, were lying around all over the place.

The adventurers who defeated that doll squad were quickly fixing their carriages rather than wasting time to enjoy their victory. Some were dealing with the barbed wire spread on the highway and were trying to deal with the problem.

“I should also go and help.”(kuroono)

We have been unexpectedly delayed already, we should quickly move away from here before the Crusaders come attacking.

Although I tried to get up, I couldn't muster strength inside my legs and had to use the tree on which I was leaning on to get my body up.

“Your wounds have been healed by the Fairy’s miracle drug but it doesn’t bring back your magical energy. It’d be wise to not move about too much.”(Fiona)

“So it seems. Shit, draining me like that, that bastard.....”

I was feeling no pain but my body was filled with lethargy and fatigue and it was difficult just to move my body.

Magical energy is an energy vital to sustaining life. If you lose too much of it, you’ll get the same symptoms as losing excessive blood.

It’s really pathetic but in such a condition, I can’t help anyone and will only end up being a hindrance. I should just wait here and restore my energy.

But I’m really lucky that my wounds have healed up. Because, my [Baphomet’s Embrace] is currently completely in tatters.

It had been cut apart by the mithril sword, and the arm section bitten off by the [Crime Eater], which made the sleeves only half now.

If it had been damaged even a little more, it would have completely lost the demonic energy residing inside of it and would not have been able to regenerate back to normal.

Even if it was a magic item, if it was destroyed too far, nothing could be done any more.

While thinking that it would take some time for the robe to restore back to normal, I once again sat back near the foot of the tree and talked to Fiona.

“What happened to the experimental squad? Were they all killed?”(kuroono)

“I and Lily-san took down 9 of them. Their ability equal to that of a rank 3 team but after Lily-san’s [Mind Jammer] activated, it became too easy.”(Fiona)

I guess they really were completely dependent on telepathy for coordination. Since they don’t have any personalities, it’s only normal that they couldn’t adapt themselves after their communication was jammed.

“But still, you guys did well actually activating that. Or rather, wasn’t Lily using her DP?”

“Yes, I used defensive magics to give Lily-san enough time to activate her DP.”

She said that so easily but isn't that pretty damn amazing? At least it's a tactic impossible for me who can only use Black Shield.

“The majority of their squad was mixed up with the light golems and were fighting with the adventurers. Since Kurono-san took down their leader, they all retreated.”(Fiona)

“I see, if they retreated then, well there's neither any reason nor enough power to pursue them. It'd be better to just leave them alone. So, how's our damages?”

“There were no casualties.”

That's actually very unexpected. No well, it's a really happy thing that no one died but considering the enemy's abilities I was prepared to face some casualties.

“Were the ones mixed up with the light golems that weak?”(kurono)

“No, it seems the enemy was trying to capture us. The adventurers who were defeated had been injured but had only been restrained after making them faint. When they retreated, they left them so we were able to save those adventurers.”

“Now that I think about it, that guy did say something about a mission.....”

Probably, they would have been experimented upon like me.

Now that they have occupied Daedalus; it disgusts me to think like that but they should have lots of 'demons' to use for such purposes.

But even then they tried to capture us all the way here; does that mean they wanted some strong ones like the adventurers?

“un, that's more or less correct.”(lily)

“Lily!?!”(kurono)

The one who suddenly answered by internal monologue was, as expected, the girl Lily.

“Oh Lily-san, are you done tort—interrogating him?”

Wait, wasn't an extremely dangerous word about to leave her mouth? Was it just my imagination?!

“I heard everything I wanted to hear.”(lily)

Lily answered with an elegant smile but her eyes had a somewhat sharp light inside it.

“What do you mean.....by interrogation?”(kuroono)

“I just asked some things from that man called Cyprus. Information gathering is also very important you know?”(lily)

“I didn't really think that he'd explain everything very easily though.”(kuroono)

“That's, well, I just used my amazing telepathy a 'little', get it?”(lily)

She smiled as she winked towards me.

What exactly does she mean by 'little'; she seemed to be not inclined in explaining so I decided not to pursue it either.

“Anyway, to explain in short, they were a squad deployed to capture strong people like us as experimental subjects. It seems it was some sort of a secret so they were pretending to be a mercenary group to mix in with the Crusaders and were looking for good 'subjects'.”(lily)

“Was it the same mercenary group that tried to attack us straight the day before yesterday?”(kuroono)

“Yes, it seems it was done to get rid of the adventurers mixed in their merc group and then use that battle as an excuse to withdraw themselves from the Crusaders forces.”

I did think that it was a useless attack but I see, so there was reason like that behind it.

The Republic's adventurers who were trying to make it big were really pitiful. We were the ones who actually killed them though.

“Also, by breaking through the forest with small numbers with brute force and summoning a large amount of light golems, they made it look like we had been surrounded in Alsace and made us retreat. After luring us this far, they would attack us where the Crusaders couldn’t see.”(lily)

“And we completely walked right into their palms.....how pathetic.”(kuroono)

Although I’m glad that we were able to repel them off brilliantly like this, if we had been captured, our fates would have been far worse than death.

And that would apply not just to me but to all of my comrades as well. Although it’s a bit late, but it still is quite a frightening thing to imagine.

“By the way Lily-san, did you get any other info? For example, about the organisation that built these Experimental bodies etc?”(Fiona)

Organisation, is it? It must be a disgusting group of worthless people but now that they have appeared in front of me like this, I need to know as much as I can about them as well.

“The organisation is called the White Sacrament. Its founder and the person in charge of these experiments is Bishop Judas. The human experimentation that Kuroono went through was one part of the plan called the Holy Soldier project. I was able to find out these three things clearly.”(lily)

I see, it’s a pretty easy to understand composition.

Bishop Judas must be that proud-looking geezer that didn’t wear a mask back then. Cyprus also knew my face and told me that I should ‘ask that geezer in Elysion’ as well.

The founder and the person-in-charge eh? If, If that man came inside my reach, I will definitely kill that geezer at all costs.

But, the Holy Soldier Project, are we supposed to be the soldiers of God?

“Selfishly calling us here and making us into pawns of God, those fucking bastards.....”

White Sacrament, Judas, alright, I’ll remember them.

Right now, I don't have the strength to stop you bastards from continuing the experiments but still, one day definitely I'll make you pay for playing around with our lives.

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Inside the forest, a single corpse was sprawled along the ground.

At a single glance, it looked like a burnt corpse but everything above the eyes had been completely blow away so it was difficult to tell whether the cause of death was the fire or due to the head being blown off.

And except the one who did this, nobody else knew the actual answer.

"Wow, you really were killed in such a flashy manner Cyprus."

Or so it was supposed to be.

A figure looked over the corpse that once belonged to a man named Cyprus.

"That fairy looks cute but totally lacks the screws in her head. It looks like an act done by an Executor of the inquisition, right Tsumiki?"

Blonde twintails and a slender waist. Both the armour on her body and the weapon on her back were meagre ones. She was the girl who only looked like a newbie adventurer, Ai.

Even in front of the cruelly slaughtered corpse, Ai kept on smiling and talked to the black cat Tsumiki beside her.

"She had used a low level fire intentionally to slowly and carefully grill him. On top of it, the nails stuck to his head also had [Pain Increaser] and [fainting obstruction – Wake Up] activated as well. Not to mention that she had also used heal magic so that he didn't die too quickly. I guess it's normal for the corpse to turn out like this. Well, in this case he simply reaped what he sowed, divine retribution, something like that."

Ai gave her thoughts about the torture show that had continued for around 20mins but the cat Tsumiki only gave a *nyaan* sleepily.

But without minding her cat, she continued talking.

“fufu, then let’s stop with my ‘Binding play’ here and I should go and greet that devil and the fairy——”

Ai touched the silver bracelet on her hand that was the most valuable looking equipment in her possession.

“——Seal Unlock.”

Along with her words, the silver bracelet broke off and was removed from her slender wrist.

That instant, her normal looking atmosphere instantly changed.

If a third party was here at this moment, he would have felt as if the air or the scenery had changed.

She who was suddenly releasing an immense amount of presence finally showed a change that could be visibly seen.

Sparkling, hazy silver aura rose from Ai’s body.

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After removing the black barbed wire that had been probably created by the experimental bodies with black magic, and by the time everyone prepared to depart with the carriages, I had also become able to move around freely.

We had wasted quite a lot of time here but there were still no signs of the Crusaders approaching us from the back.

It’s still unknown how much time it would take for them to catch up with us if they start pursuing us seriously so we need to create as much distance as we can or I won’t be able to stay relieved.

Also, in the previous battle, although there were zero casualties, there were quite a lot of injured ones. Actually, the ones without any wounds were the rarer ones.

I'm glad everyone had prepared their carriages for the purpose of escaping each and every one. For the time being, we could move as long as we could lay them inside the carriages.

"Alright, everyone is ready right?"

Then let's depart, the moment I was about to shout that and get on my carriage,

"——Everyone get down! Black Shield!!"

As I shouted at once, I deployed defensive magic at full strength.

That's because spears of light came down raining on us from the sky, no they should be called pillars of light.

What the hell is that? Were there still enemies hiding there? Rather than that, if those giant and thick things exploded as well, shit, it's like a goddamn missile!

"[Terra Wall Defan].——الجار لمنع واسع نطاق على صخرة"

From behind me, a high speed chant was heard. Fiona, is it?

Even faster than I realized that, a defensive magic much better than mine appeared as the earth rose like a intermediate level wide range defensive magic.

With tremors like a small earthquake, a cliff rose right in front of me.

It's not an actual cliff but it was big enough to feel like that. It's width was enough to perfectly cover the highway to both the sides.

The moment that a much larger than normal [Terra Wall Defan] was completed, the pillars of light finally arrived.

GAGAGAGAGA———

The row of light pillars struck the cliff's surface from above.

The Terra Wall Defan was made of stiff and sturdy rocks but the pillars of light stabbed through it as ignoring the wall.

The pillars of light seemed as if they would completely pulverise the wall but contrary to expectations, they stuck on the wall like the steel frame on a concrete block.

“.....they won't explode right?”

The moment I said that, as if remembering it, a rumbling sound came as the cliff began to crumble.

A large amount of rocks scattered on the highway and only the pillars of light stuck on the ground remained.

They lined up in a grid pattern to seal off the highway.

Maybe this might be a derived version of a light type defensive magic.

But that doesn't mean I can let down my guard. They might explode the next moment. Or maybe these were meant to stop us and now attack magic would come flying towards us.

“Ah, sorry, you don't have to be so alert, you know?”

Suddenly, the nonchalant voice of a girl came.

The tone of the voice was like it was meant to spoil our vigilance and alertness. Though, of course, not a single one among us did that.

“.....Who is it?”

Since the voice came from beyond my shield, she must be standing in front of me.

If I were to believe her words, it seems the enemy doesn't intend to attack me instantly.

Resolving myself, I removed my shield and looked at the enemy in front of me.

“Nice to meetcha, I'm Ai!”

On the other side of the grid made by the light pillars, a single girl was standing.

Her shining blonde twintails gave her a slightly childish look but they really suited her round blue sparkling eyes and cute face.

Her armour included a simple leather breastplate, boots and gloves and beneath it was a thin shirt and a miniskirt. It really didn't look like it had any magical enchantments or effects.

She really looked like a newbie adventurer from every angle but from her small body,

“No, no way.....”

I can never forget, it's the same silverish aura that was enveloped Sariel which was created from her thick white magical energy.

But this girl was definitely not Sariel.

But still to have that aura means,

“.....an Apostle?”

The girl, with a wide smile that might make one remember of a sunflower, answered.

“Yup. I'm the 8th Apostle Ai!” [T/N:Ai uses ~ desu a lot at the end of her sentences when she's acting cute.]

She named herself as if it was a light joke.

But that's impossible, it can't be, such words of refusal didn't hold any meaning in front of that silver aura.

Right, I should just accept it that the impossible has now become possible. The worst case where an Apostle has appeared.

“Now then, Devil-san, wouldn't you keep me company for a while?”

And thus, the 8th Apostle Ai stood in my way.

Chapter 142 – The Circumstances of the 8th Apostle

In the plaza of Alsace Village many soldiers were waiting with the cavalry troops at lead.

The safe and sound Pegasus Knights Group was also included in them. Their mission was to pursue the demons who planned the escape and had run away from the village. The preparations for departing were already completed, but they were still on standby.

After all,

“Please wait some time before pursuing.”

Sister Silvia had stopped the Norz, who was in high spirits to pursue.

“What did you just say, Sister Silvia?”

It was impossible to not hear her clear tone and words unless one was deaf. The reason he asked her back was to give her the chance to correct her words.

“I said to wait some time before pursuing. If you couldn’t hear it then there is a possibility of your ear having problems. Shall I use Laser Heal?”

It seems like because of not hearing her poisoned words for some time now, My proficiency in the ignoring skill has reduced.

He had a feeling of praising himself for not punching her who was standing in front of him.

“You, surely aren’t connected to the demons, right?”

There won’t be anything good in her other than her outward appearance if she is like those demons. It will need to ‘Dispose’ of this conceited adjutant, or rather I want it to happen.

The bloodthirst in Norz eyes was the real deal.

However, Silvia didn’t show any sign of fear and continued her words with her usual cool attitude.

“Head Priest Norz, it will be in your good interests if you hear this quietly, after all, this is an order.”

“Order? Order you say, impossible, just who got the balls to give me some orders here, huh!”

He shouted in a loud voice that his subordinates would shudder up if they heard it. Silvia takes out a single sealed letter with an expression that said she was fed up from him.

“Go ahead and read it”

Norz took the sealed letter as if snatching, and was about to see inside but stopped his movements after he saw the red sealing wax on the letter.

“This is the.....Holy Cross Insignia?”

On the sealing wax of the Church, which was leading the Crusaders, there always was a mark of Cross imprinted in it.

The sealing wax on the sealed letter in Norz hands, had the mark of Cross with a different design from normal ones.

The people who could use the Holy Cross Insignia as a sealing wax were only Pope or Cardinals. In other words, there were only 4 people in this world who could use that seal.

And, to a cross believer getting a sealed letter with Holy Cross Insignia as the sealing wax, it would be like getting a written order from heavens.

Norz who understood all that in an instant, completely vanished his anger and unsealed the letter with wavy hands.

“Are these the orders from His highness, Cardinal Mercedes.....”

Upon reading the content of the document, a streak of cold sweat poured from his face.

“I-Impossible.....The 8th Apostle you say!”

“Have your head calmed down a bit now. It is not unusual for the armies of republic being under the command of Apostles temporarily.”

The contents of the document written by Cardinal Mercedes were the words of Silvia 「When the time comes, get under the command of 8th Apostel and quietly follow the orders.」 written in a roundabout manner which was the characteristic of a high-ranking clergyman.

“That’s not the problem! Just who is the 8th Apostle. Don’t tell me——”

Norz looked at Sister with red hair standing in front him.

“No, it’s not me.”

“H-Hah, I see, don’t scare me like this——”

“My superior is the 8th Apostle, though”

“What did you say?!”

Norz yelled as if surprised while spitting out saliva. Silvia instantly took a step back and escaped the range of fire.

“No way. Sister Silvia you are Cardinal Mercedes’s——”

“That is a delusion you made on your own accord.”

Silvia wasn’t foolish as she knew what Norz had thought about her.

“My head is 8th Apostle Ai-sama. She is quite a wild person, that’s why someone like me takes care of the ‘miscellaneous matters’.”

“Ai? I seem to have heard this name somewhere.....”

Other than being angry at Silvia calling the work of adjutant as miscellaneous matter, Norz was trying hard to find the person named Ai.

“It is only a temporary social position, that she is an adventurer in the Cyprus Mercenary Group. The adventurer who came back alive alone from Irz Village, is Ai-sama.”

“Ah, Aaaa!? That foolish looking brat, huh!?”

“Be careful of your words. Or else do you want to be condemned to be crucified due to lese majeste.”

“Ku.....but, she doesn’t has look anything like an Apostle.....No, the 7th Apostle Sariel is also an exception, it’s only natural for people like her, huh”
He recalled the appearance of Apostles, it won’t be strange for a child or woman to be an apostle too.

And along with it, he recalled the rumours about 8th Apostle.

“I see, 8th Apostle, eh.....Well, it’s no wonder nobody found out her identity”

“I’m thankful that you can understand it.”

Norz who had calmed down, asked a question to his adjutant, no, the direct subordinate of an Apostle.

“And so, the standby orders are given from 8th Apostle, huh?”

“She said she wanted to fight against ‘Devil’ and not to let anyone near because it would be a hindrance in the duel”

“To defeat the annoying devil, huh. It’s somewhat regrettable that the good part will be taken away, but I don’t have any say here if an Apostle of the Republic says so.”

Apostle and Devil. It wasn't even needed to guess who was stronger.

Norz revealed a faint smile after the death of Devil who had killed many of his soldiers, had been confirmed.

"Well, who knows.....After Ai-sama returns you will get your commander position once again, then continue the pursuit or whatever you want."

"An apostle herself has gone, won't the demons be annihilated?"

Norz knew that the Apostles had the power to kill even the mob of demons under the command of Devil along with devil easily.

Surely, Norz dealt heavy damages to them in the battle, but he had no confidence in winning against the apostles.

"She didn't have any interest in other demons, so maybe she will let them run."

"W-What!? Then there won't be a meaning to it!"

"That's why, at that time you will pursue them and kill them. Simple as that. Right now it will be good to at least complete the preparations to cross Reine River."

"Gu....."

He thought that only a fool would let the demons escape, but there was no change in their mission, it would be the very best to listen to Silvia's words and so Norz agreed to her words due to thinking rationally.

"Ah, aside from that, please complete the preparations to greet Ai-sama when she returns. She has been lamenting that she wasn't getting any good thing to eat recently."

".....Got it, I will complete the preparations."

Damn Selfish Apostle, she should learn something from Saniel-sama. Norz nodded while he cursed within his heart.

Chapter 143 - Handicap

The pillars of light that had struck the ground in a grid pattern as if to block ones advance had already disappeared.

The carriages filled with adventurers ran away at full speed through the highway. As I saw them off as they disappeared, I finally relaxed, yet at the same time I also felt a bit lonely.

But, now's not the time to get all emotional.

At the cost of letting those adventurers run away, I, no, we are supposed to face the 8th Apostle in a battle.

“nn mou, don't glare at me like that. Look, we are just having a duel after all, let's have fun alright?”

The Apostle known as Ai seems to like talking a lot unlike Sariel.

Although she talks in a ridiculous manner, it seems she has an interest in me and Lily.

She probably hasn't considered Fiona in her thoughts because probably she hasn't seen her full strength.

“I let them run away right? Try to believe in me a bit!” (Ai)

“.....I see.”

Is what I say, but I have no intention to believe her unconditionally.

Her wish is to fight us. If we faced her without running away, she said that she would not attack and pursue the adventurers as well as the refugees.

Disregarding the danger to our lives, it's a really incredible condition which would help us in finishing this emergency quest.

But still, there's no proof that she would keep her promise. She could easily break her promise just on a whim and we don't even have the strength to go find fault with her for that.

Yes, the moment the existence called an Apostle appeared, there was no scope for negotiations at all. If we don't play along with her whims and wishes, we would be annihilated here anyway.

"Kurono! We'll be fine if we are all together!"

The child Lily claimed that strongly as she pulled on my robe.

"Yes, it seems the opponent only wants to have a test of strength. There's chance that we won't be killed even if we fight her."(Fiona)

Fiona gave her surprisingly slightly negative opinion.

".....yeah, well we can't step away from it anyway. Might as well do as much as we can."

The ones who will face the Apostle are me, Lily and Fiona, basically the members of [Element Master].

According to this adventurer wannabe Apostle,

"If you're in a party then you must fight together!"(Ai)

Said something like that and wished to face our party together. Of course, I had no reason to refuse her, not that I could have anyway.

Rather than thinking that I ended up dragging Lily and Fiona with me as well, since we are in a party, our lives are already supposed to be one, I should have already resolved for this.

That's why, I will not do something like apologising to those two.

"Say, say, Devil-san,"(Ai)

A nonchalant came to us as if ignoring our tension completely.

By devil, she must be talking to me.

During the battle at Alsace, the Crusaders did call me a Devil or something so I realized that I had been apparently given such a dishonourable nickname.

"What is it?"(kurono)

“Devil-san and the Witch-san over there seem to be quite tired. Haven’t you used up more than half of your magical energy?”

Maybe she had a skill that could discern the amount of magical energy possessed by someone else, she spoke that with much confidence.

A handicap/disadvantage for one’s enemy is not something one should say out loud normally but I guess things like that don’t hold any meaning towards Apostles.

“And, what about it?”(kuroono)

“That’s troublesome for me, so—“(Ai)

She rummaged through the pouch on her waist and,

“—quickly restore yourselves completely, ‘kay?”(Ai)

Saying that, she threw a small bottle towards us which I reflexively caught with my hands.

The 10cm big container was filled with a water like transparent liquid but some light particles were shining inside that liquid.

It’s probably some kind of a potion, I think but,

“It’s an Elixir.”(Fiona)

Fiona gave me the answer from the side.

“Elixir? It has quite the exaggerated name but is it amazing?”(kuroono)

“It’s the greatest potion in existence, at least on the Arc continent.”(Fiona)

“Show it to Lily, Show it to Lily as well!”(lily)

It’s apparently amazing but how amazing is it exactly?

At least it’s not some kind of explosive so I gave it to Lily.

As Lily took the shining bottle and inspected it with a serious gaze, I asked Ai.

“Do you want us to drink this?”(kuroono)

“Yup.”(Ai)

Ai nodded with a smile. Well I didn’t think there would have been any other reason for giving us that.

“Okay.”(kuroono)

“Oh, you don’t doubt that it’s a poison or something?”(Ai)

“There’s no meaning to do something like that. Also, weren’t you the one who asked us to believe in you?”(Kuroono)

“fufuu, I see, yup yup, I really like honest and good kids like you. Well, that Elixir is my treat to you so drink it all!”

While looking at Ai, who was smiling happily, with a cool gaze, I turned to Fiona and Lily.

“Let’s divide it in three.”(kuroono)

The order of level of magical energy exhaustion was Me>Fiona>Lily, but it wasn’t like Lily wasn’t tired at all. If we were going recover, we all need to do so.

“I think a single sip would have enough effect. It won’t be much trouble to split this much in three parts.”(Fiona)

“Then, Lily can go fir——“

“Here Kuroono!”

Interrupting my words, Lily handed back the potion back to me.

“n, oh right I should still first check for poison just in case.”

There’s no proof that this liquid was actually an Elixir. I can’t have Lily drink something suspicious like that.

Rethinking again, I came to the conclusion that this was also the job of the leader and opened the bottle and gulped the Elixir.

“——!? This is.....what incredible recovery power!”

Even though I had barely 10% of my magical energy remaining; I could feel my black magical energy steadily filling back like petrol being filled in the petrol tank.

Compared to other potions and healing magics, my magical energy regenerated with an extreme speed and even my fatigue was blown away.

My wounds, magical energy, stamina, all recovered almost instantly. It really has an incredible recovery power.

“So it’s the real thing it seems.”(Fiona)

“Yeah. Well, even if this wasn’t actually an Elixir, it doesn’t change the fact that its power is the real thing. Then next is—-”

I began to give it to Fiona who was the second most tired among us but,

“No! Next will be Lily!!”(lily)

Once again, I was interrupted by Lily.

Somehow she’s being unusually wilful today. What made her suddenly attracted to this? Could it be that she’s affected by the fact that this elixir had higher efficiency than her miracle drug?

“Only drink half of it, alright?”(kurono)

“Un!”

Lily took the bottle with a happy smile.

Holding the bottle firmly with her two hands, she licked the rim with her small mouth as if tasting it and then after she was satisfied, finally gulped down the Elixir.

“—puhaa.”

After drinking exactly half of it,

“My turn.”

Lily, who seemed to have no interest in it any longer, gave it to Fiona

But her face looked somewhat satisfied as if she had just completed some hard work.

“n, this feeling, it really is an Elixir.”

Fiona gave such an impression after drinking while I was unaware.

“It didn’t really have a taste, but can you tell?”(kuroono)

“The feeling on drinking it is somewhat different from normal water. It feels somewhat like Sake though it might be difficult for you to understand that since you haven’t drunk this before.”(Fiona)

Well, now that she said it, I did feel it gently melt away-like sensation when I put it inside my mouth.

I did hear a same impression when my parents had drunk a high class wine a long time ago.

Does this Elixir have alcohol content in it as well?

“Anyway, with this, we have fully recovered. Whether we’ll be able to win against an Apostle or not even then is different matter altogether though.”(Fiona)

“Don’t say such things.”(kuroono)

We can win if we fight hard with all we’ve got! But it’s really bitter that I can’t really say that out loud.

But, I and Lily have experience of fighting against Sariel and Fiona is originally from the Republic as well so she should be well aware of an Apostle’s strength.

None of us could easily say that ‘We’ll defeat the Apostle!’ unfortunately.

“But still, we must make plans with the intent to kill her.....”(kuroono)

I once again turned back towards Ai.

“*yawn* ~”

This bitch, yawning like that! Even though she was the one who came and attacked us, does she even have the will to fight us?

“aa~aa, say, you did drink the Elixir right? Then take a rest now. You’ll probably recover to your max strength in one hour.”(Ai)

“You’ll wait that long for us? You really are a patient person.”(kuroono)

“Well it’s not like the Elixir recovers someone absolutely instantly after all. I have no choice but to wait for you. Also, don’t you need some time to make some plans as well, right?”(Ai)

“If you’re really going to give us that, then I’ll gladly take you up on the offer.”(kuroono)

It seems she really want us to fight at full strength. She is being thorough enough to not let us be in any kind of disadvantage.

“Oh right, my weapon is just this bow and I won’t use my armament scriptures so no need to worry over that.”(Ai)

She said that as she swung her worn out long bow that seemed on the verge of breaking.

The Armament scriptures were I think the amazing weapons made for the personal and exclusive use for the Apostles. Fiona did talk about that as well.

This Ai as well as that Saniel, it seems Apostles really like to hold back when fighting.

It really is extremely irritating. Even though we are fighting with our lives on the line, she just went and intervened just to play around.

“....Got it.”(kuroono)

“nfufu, to not get angry even though I am clearly giving a handicap, you really are a honest and good kid Devil-san.”(Ai)

Unfortunately, I am neither a proud warrior nor a noble knight. I’m just a simple adventurer. If you’re giving me an opening I can take advantage of, I’ll be glad to use it to the fullest.

But that doesn’t mean I’ll actually thank you for it though.

I turned my back to Ai once again and went and sat down with my back towards one of the trees on the side of the highway.

The two of them also sat down on the soft grass near me.

“*Yaa~wnn.....”

Ai sat down on the other side along with her pet or maybe her familiar black cat.

While sitting in that lazy posture, she closed her eyes and soon the sound of her sleeping came.

Completely defenceless, without any caution, she's completely looking down on us but considering her ability and strength, I can't be rash and just attack her madly.

Rather than getting irritated, I should be happy that at least she won't just rush in to attack us in a weird way out of nowhere.

“Now then, we need to think of a way to defeat that ridiculous Apostle in this one hour. Got any ideas?”



Chapter 144 - Element Master Vs The 8th Apostle (1)

As the sun began to set and the sky started becoming redder, Ai finally woke up from her deep sleep.

“Nn?”

As she opened her eyes, with the setting sun as the background, the devil, the witch and the fairy were standing and facing her.

“I expected you guys to come attacking at me without warning but, nfufu, it seems you’re quite the gentleman, Devil-san.”

Clearly, a lot more than just one hour had passed but she was the one who had been sleeping, and its not like she was in any hurry so there were no problems really.

Ai was just satisfied if the opponent had finally become ready to fight her.

And, she had expected them to surprise attack her while she was sleeping ‘like an adventurer’, but the fact that she was proven wrong made her sad as well as happy at the same time.

“I’m not a Devil. My name is Kurono Mao.”

“I see! So you’re not a devil but a demon king, ahhahahaha!”(T/N: in case you didn’t know, Maou= Demon King in Jap)

First a Devil, then a demon king. Kurono moved his eyebrow on Ai’s loud laughter and glared sharply at her with his evil looking face as if to not allow any action made by her to be left unnoticed.

“While we’re at it, I’d be happy if the witch girl and the fairy who grew up suddenly could also name themselves.”(Ai)

Kurono looked towards the two girls beside him.

“Fiona Soleil.”

“Lily.”

The witch Fiona who gave her name quite politely and the fairy Lily who was clearly releasing an immense amount of killing intent.

Satisfied after hearing their names, Ai nodded and jumped up from her lying posture instantly.

“I named myself earlier as well but once again, I’m the 8th Apostle Ai. Ah, by the way, this is Tsumiki-chan, cute isn’t it?”

She showed the black cat in her hands. Probably, the cat had no interest in the three standing in front of it as it just gave a small *nyaa*.

“Is that a familiar servant of yours?”(kurono)

“nn, oh, don’t worry, I’ll be fighting alone. Now then, Tsumiki-chan go and wait for your master like a good child ‘kay? I’ll show you your master’s cool form!”

Tsumiki who got away from her restrains ran away quickly inside the forest and disappeared.

“Nn mouu, I wanted you to cheer for me——-well, whatever. Then, you guys, come at me whenever you are ready!”(Ai)

And thus, Ai faced the three of them with the highway in middle of them.

There was no signal, but, at that moment, the curtains on this fight were definitely opened.

“——Let’s go.”

The first one to move was Kurono.

The moment he swung his baton, Ai’s vision was obstructed by a black smoke as dark as the night itself.

Soon the whole surroundings were covered with dense black smoke and nothing could be seen through.

But of course, Ai didn’t show any signs of faltering and without even trying to get out of that black smoke, took a stance with her long bow.

“I guess [Lux Blast] should be fine enough.”

As she pulled the worn out bowstring that looked like it might break any moment, light particles began gathering and soon formed into an arrow of light.

It seems she did not require an actual arrow to attack. Even with just her bow, she can easily use magic without any problems.

“Eiyah!”

The moment it was released from the bowstring, it burst to numerous beams and blocked the various black blades that were approaching from inside the black smoke.

White magic and Black magic clashed in mid air and light and darkness scattered each other.

“Halberds? Oh, the ones used by those light golems. How shrewd ~”(Ai)

The enemy’s attack that were the black blades; Ai saw its true form just before they were smashed to pieces.

But, compared to the halberds used by actual heavy knights, it was a weapon of a much lower grade.

The fact that Kurono could remotely use weapons to attack after enchanting them with his black magic was already known by Ai who was watching his battle with Cyprus from the sidelines while eating the portable food.

Thus, she had quickly seen through the halberd attacks.

“Now then, next is—-“

My turn to attack, is what she thought as she pulled her bowstring again but,

“Oops!?”(Ai)

She quickly jumped away from the place she was standing.

The very next instant, in the place where she was standing, a pillar of light fell down from the skies like a laser beam and created a giant explosion.

She guessed that probably this was the Extra Magic of that fairy known as Lily.

(“It’s as strong as an advanced level magic, not to mention that its activation speed is pretty fast as well. That could be dangerous.”)

As she jumped away to dodge the laser beam, she continued with her momentum to get out of the black smoke as well.

By using [Air Walker] martial art reflexively, Ai moved few meters of distance instantly but,

“—Kuronagi.”

The moment she came out of the black smoke, Kurono appeared while swinging his hatchet along with his martial art skill.

“Sooi!!”(Ai)

She jumped and rolled forward to dodge the martial art [Kuronagi] that was approaching while tracing a black shine.

She felt the hatchet with the ominous aura pass just above her head.

The moment she thought that she had avoided it, a slight pain ran through Ai’s back.

“iih!?”

She intuitively understood that she had been cut and soon after she also realized what had cut her.

In Kurono’s left hand was a silvery shining long sword.

“As expected of a mithril blade, it was able to cut through even that aura easily.”(kurono)

“Cyprus’ blade!? You really are extremely shrewd!!”(Ai)

It was a sword with a simple design but it was undoubtedly Cyprus’ [Mithril Sword].

The reason he’s using it just like that is probably because his affinity with white magic inside it is bad.

No, rather than that, Ai was thinking about something else altogether.

(“His movements are completely different from the time he was fighting against Cyprus—”)

He had a speed that could keep up with her who was even using [Air Walker]. And the fact that he was able to attack with a speed with which he could hurt even her, both were things which could not be seen in his previous battle.

But the moment Ai saw the witch holding her long staff, she got the answer to her question as well.

“I see, so you are under the effects of enhancement Boost!”(Ai)

“Correct!”(Kuronon)

The hatchet with the ominous black aura and the long sword with the white divine aura, these 2 combo of black and white attacked Ai who had nothing but a bow in her hands.

“—!?”

With a power that was already much above humans, he now also had the help of Fiona’s [Force Boost]. The sword attacks of such a Kuronon were as sharp, fast and heavy as a master swordsman.

Physical attacks, magic attacks, an Apostle’s unique silver aura held a resistance against both of these, but the swords swung by Kuronon were cutting through it as if it really were nothing but mist.

Realizing that her aura’s defensive abilities were as good as nil now, Ai quickly began to take evasive actions under the consecutive storm like attacks with the help of her dynamic vision, body movement and intuition.

“ooo—”

Ai was completely on the defensive. A single cut ran through her soft cheek and fresh blood flowed out from the wound.

Ignoring the fact that her face, which is considered her life for a girl, had been injured, her face showed an expression of joy.

“Not bad! Much better than what I was expecting!”(Ai)

The moment she said that, Ai became aware of the slight presence that had approached her from behind.

“Even though you say that, you’re still holding back right?”(Lily)

As she turned back, Ai saw a beautiful girl leaping towards her.

While disheveling her platinum blond hair and releasing an immense killing intent from her emerald eyes, Lily was there who was stretching her delicate glass like hands towards Ai.

(“Ah, this is bad.”)(Ai)

As shivers ran down her spine, Ai used all her might to evade that.

Just what level of heat did it possess; the cute little hand of the Fairy was shining with a green light.

Concentrating on getting away from that Fairy’s attack that was most probably a sure-kill attack, she had no choice but to become unable to completely dodge Kurono’s attack who was attacking from the front.

“Kuah!!”

As Ai sensed Lily’s hand grazing her temporal region, a much stronger pain ran through her limbs.

Ai’s clean and pure looking thighs and upper arm now had a gaping red wound due to Kurono’s double attacks.

It was nowhere near a fatal wound but it certainly gave some damage. As she felt the clear pain from damage that she had not felt in a long time,

(“I guess I’ll have to reevaluate them once again.”)(Ai)

She decided to acknowledge the strength of this party as one level above of what she had originally expected.

“—[Lux Kris Sagita].”

The moment she drew her bow in a matter of seconds, 2 arrows of light were nocked on the bow.

What was released was the intermediate level light attack magic. Both the arrows certainly captured both Kurono and Lily who were in different

directions and approached them while changing their trajectories in mid air.

Kurono was light weight as well as possessed a [mithril sword] that had high resistance towards light magic and Lily originally had an extremely strong light magic [Oracle Field] so they were both able to defend against the light arrows fired by Ai.

In front of them, the two arrows flashed as they were broken.

In the time those two were blocked by that light, Ai had already moved ten meters above the highway to create a distance between them.

“Wow that really was good. It’s been a really long time since I was cornered like this by just three people.”(Ai)

Even while blood flowed from her wounds, Ai spoke happily without even trying to use any healing magic.

Without really showing any surprise towards her, the three of them remained cautiously in their stances.

“I guess I’ll need to get rid of another seal or I won’t be able to face you guys properly—”

Ai stretched her free right hand, that wasn’t holding the bow, towards the hairband on her twintails.

Her hair weren’t held up by gum or strings but was tied up with a silver ring.

It was of the same material as the silver bracelet that she had been wearing just a while back. As she touched it lightly, Ai chanted.

“—Seal Unlock.”

And just like the silver bracelet the silver ring on her hair also—did not break and fall.

“.....huh?”

Ai made a surprised expression. This was not her usual playing around face but she was actually surprised right now.

(“Huh, what’s going on, why isn’t it breaking off? Did it fail?”)

She poked at her hairband with her finger tips but there was no response. It was as if it had become just a normal silver accessory.

But that’s impossible. These items were seals meant to seal her infinite white magical energy provided by God. It was a necessary ‘restraint’ for Ai who had been acting as a normal adventurer.

“Seal unlock! Seal Unlock!!”

The seal should have been removed with just those words but the hairbands were really not responding at all.

(“nonono, how can it fail with such a timing—no, if it was broken then the seal should have been automatically removed. But to not respond to the keywords even then...”)

Ai who knew the structure of the ring quickly thought of one possible probability.

“—[Mind Jammer]!?!”

And the enemy clearly had a member in their party who was able to use such a skill.

The Fairy Lily. She had used her Mind Jammer to destroy the network between the experimental squad and had made annihilating them very easy.

(“But, but this and that need two different types of Jammer. To be able to pinpoint the sealing item so accurately, just how—”)

She thought about the source, naturally she should be able to find out the answer like that.

But still, The enemy wasn’t merciful and gentle enough to give her such time. After all, even if this was half play for Ai, for them it was battle for their lives.

“—Anchor Hand!”

It was exactly the same form that he had used against Cyprus. The 4 jet black big tentacles created by Kurono rushed towards Ai like surging waves.

“Uwaa——“

In a panic, she pulled her bowstring to counter it.

Under the effects of the seal, she could only use [Lux Sagita] that could be fired instantaneously but,

“Black Shield!”

There was no way a few low level magic attacks could stop Kurono’s advance who was also using defensive magic.

“Mouu, wait a sec——“

If she couldn’t stop then she had no choice but to run and create some distance between them.

Ai, who was still under the effects of [Air walker], tried to quickly move away from there but,

“How foolish. Do you really think we’d let you run away?”(lily)

Lily who had appeared behind Ai out of nowhere came to stop her.

Lily’s balls of light blocked all paths of evading Kurono’s attack.

(“Oh crap, there’s no way to run——“)(Ai)

She thought of rushing through it but soon decided otherwise. In her current situation, the damage she would take from Lily’s balls of light filled with magical energy and killing intent would be too high to bear.

As a result, Ai pulled her bowstrings now that her escape route was blocked and had no choice but to aim towards Kurono who was coming at her with 4 tentacles growing out of him.

The shield that had withstood countless arrows of light had already disappeared so she fired to at least stop him somewhat if it hit his body directly but,

“He’s dodging even from this range?!“

Whether he had used intuition or maybe he had simply seen through it, Kurono fell down on all four limbs like an animal to dodge as the arrows of light flew above him.

“Got you!”(kurono)

The weirdly moving 4 tentacles quickly restrained Ai who had lost all ways to evade or counter back.

“Aaah!?!”

The distance between both was 4m. Ai who had been caught by the 4 tentacles growing out of Kurono’s shoulder and back, obviously struggled and moved around to free herself but,

(“Uwaah, this tentacle, its dangerously dense enough to not be stopped by just by the magical energy of my aura!”)

Ai, who was in a sealed state, had no way of getting away from those stiff and strong tentacles that had been created by Kurono with a lot of black magical energy.

“Oracle Field – Max power!!”

Behind Ai, Lily’s voice could be heard. And the oracle field that had been deployed was,

“Now—“(kurono)

Completely covered Kurono’s body inside the sphere.

She was caught and the enemy had deployed a defensive magic around him. Considering the situation, Ai could guess the conclusion of this.

And that her answer was right was proven the moment she looked above.

“—Do it! Fiona!!”(kurono)

Above Ai, a giant shining golden fireball of around 5m in diameter had appeared.

“[Golden Sun- Aur Soleil]”

“Eh, wait—“(Ai)

The sun that could kill an Apostle fell from the sky.



Chapter 145 - Element Master Vs The 8th Apostle (2)

“Now then, we need to think of a way to defeat that ridiculous Apostle in this one hour. Got any ideas?”

I said that pretty much irresponsibly but,

“Yes, there is just one way.”

Unexpectedly, a proposal that I thought was impossible was given.

It was Fiona who raised her hand to give the proposal.

“Really?”(kuroono)

“It’s not a sure-fire method and there are a lot of prerequisites as well.”(Fiona)

“Tell us.”(kuroono)

Honestly speaking, I couldn’t think of anything else other than fighting her head on. So if there actually was a different plan, I would definitely hear it.

I urged Fiona to continue while laying my hopes on her.

“Among the Apostles, there are items that can seal their magical power so that they can hide their identities apparently. The 8th Apostle Ai is the missing Apostle that I had told you about back then.”

Oh right, she had told me something like that as well. I thought that they must have hidden themselves to do some reforms etc. but to think that it was that girl.

“But, you’re pretty knowledgeable about them. Aren’t such things supposed to be secrets?”(kuroono)

“The 8th Apostle is famous to move around incognito all over the Republic. But due to that, there is no info regarding her abilities or powers at all.”(Fiona)

I see, so she’s quite popular unexpectedly.

“Since she’s a person who has been hiding themselves, there is a large possibility that they would be using a magical energy sealing item, is it?”(kurono)

“Exactly. And if she is using magic items that seal magical energy, then we should be able to interfere with it and stop her from unsealing her powers.”(Fiona)

“I see, the three of us together could defeat a weakened Apostle but—“

The problem was whether Ai was actually using such an item or not.

I fought Sariel twice but I never confirmed the presence of such an item.

And even if Ai did have one, then the problem would be exactly how are we supposed to interfere with it.

At least, it’s impossible for me who can only use black magic and is absolutely illiterate regarding how magic actually works in this different world.

“Say Fiona.”(lily)

As I was thinking about it, Lily spoke beside me.

She had returned back to her child form but I guess she kept her adult consciousness considering the way she is talking.

“Are there a lot of types of such sealing magic items in the republic?”(lily)

“No, there are not much variations of such items that can continuously seal a person’s magical energy. They are extremely costly as well and not to mention the church has restricted them so they are kind of a taboo item.”(Fiona)

“I see. Then the sealing item on that Apostle is—“

As Lily activated her Dimension magic as a small magic circle of light appeared, a white ring that I recognised appeared.

“—Then there’s a high chance it is similar to this one, right?”(lily)

“Wha, that’s!”(kurono)

As Lily slightly traced her small fingertips around the ring, 7 needles jumped out with a shrill sound.

“Yes, it’s an [Angel Ring] attached to those experimental subjects.”(lily)

As she traced her fingers around the ring again, the needles went back inside the ring.

“

Honestly speaking, this item which has a ridiculous name like [Angel Ring] has already become a annoying symbol of restraint and confinement for me.

I feel bad just by seeing it.

But, there must be some meaning behind the fact that Lily has it right now.

“If it has the same structure as this ring, you think you can easily interfere with it?”(kuroono)

It seems the [Angel Ring] also has a magic sealing feature in it.

When I had this thing on me, no, it was probably just not used on me. Although I myself have no experience of having my magic sealed, it was definitely used by Cyprus to bring those experimental bodies along with him here.

“Exactly, although I’ll need to use a completely different type of [Mind Jammer] than the one I used against those experiments, but I think I can do it.”(Lily)

“Well if it’s Lily-san, I think she can do it.”(Fiona)

So it seems using the sealing strategy is actually possible.

“But the main problem is still whether she actually has such a sealing object or not. It’s obvious that she’d hold back while fighting against us but that doesn’t really require a sealing item to do so.”(kuroono)

“That’s true. Also, if we are going to interfere directly with the sealing item, we need to where exactly it is located as well.”(Fiona)

Just as Fiona said, to obstruct the experiments, it was fine by just using [Mind Jammer] in the surrounding space but in this case, there was a need to pinpoint the sealing item before using the jammer.

The former worked like an EMP in our original world which obstructed radio and other electrical devices. The latter was more like hacking a PC through the internet.

“Either case is not a problem. I’ll find that out with my Telepathy.”(lily)

“You can do that? An Apostle might be able to defend against telepathy you know?”(kurono)

I’m not really sure how telepathy works exactly since I can’t use it myself.

But still, I know that telepathy isn’t omnipotent. Magics like [Mind Protect], or attacking back with [Counter] or [Reflect] also exist to face against it.

“It’ll be fine. Sariel’s mind was rigid and ‘frozen’ enough that there was no gap to peek through but this one’s quite lax. I’ll be able to read the outer thoughts without any problems.”(lily)

It seems there would be no problem then. Or rather, Lily actually used telepathy on Sariel as well?

Maybe I should ask more about this later in detail.....

“Alright, then let’s go with this strategy. I’ll ask just in case but do we have any way of dealing with her in case a sealing item did not exist at all?”(kurono)

“In such a case, let’s just work hard and give it our all together.”(Fiona)

“Lily’ll work hard as well!”(lily)

“Got it. In case it doesn’t work, let’s just go with a full on frontal attack. Also Lily, you won’t fool even if you act like your child form.”(kurono)

Lily averted her gaze as she blushed slightly. Ah, she’s really cute.

No, this isn’t the time to be admiring Lily. I must think about the current strategy right now.

“Even in a sealed state, our opponent is still an Apostle. It’ll be normal for her to have magical energy better than a first class magician and she can probably use the same level of magics as well. Even if our plan goes well, it won’t be easy enough that we’ll get out of this unscathed.”(Fiona)

“I guess that’s true. In case the fight was dragged on too much, she might find a way to release her seal as well. If possible, as fast as possible.....let’s aim for the timing when she’d be panicking after finding that she can’t remove her seal—“(kurono)

.
. .

And, our strategy worked just as planned.

As expected, Ai fought while holding back against us at first. And as for finding out whether she had a sealing item or not,

“Even though you say that, you’re still holding back right?”(Lily)

Lily had only grazed against her head but her hand had definitely touched it. And at that moment she became sure of it.

(“I found it. There are two sealing items. The silver hairbands.”)

When Lily had asked her whether she had been holding back against us, Ai had thought of those sealing items for just a moment.

It was clearly at a level which could be read by Lily.

With this, “Ai is using a sealing item.” The first condition had been cleared.

(“—It’s fine, it’s the same structure as the ring. I can use jammer on it!”)

And that cleared the second condition.

After coming this far, we only needed to move as planned.

Stopping Ai was my job. And delivering the final blow was Fiona’s job.

To use the [Golden Sun – Aur Soleil], Fiona didn’t take part in attacking actively and simply supported with enhancement magics.

Though, even her enhancements were showing incredible effects. I was extremely surprised when my blade actually hit an Apostle.

And as a result, Ai decided to release another level of her seals to fight against us.

And with this,

“.....Eh? Seal unlock! Seal Unlock!!”

As I expected, a clear fatal opening was created.

“—[Mind Jammer]!?!”

It seems she had already found out the reason behind it, but it's already too late.

“How foolish. Do you really think we'd let you run away?”(lily)

“Got you!”(kuro no)

And, finally I restrained Ai with my [Anchor Hand].

“Now! Do it, Fiona!!”(kuro no)

Now, this checkmate 8th Apostle!

Just as my body was covered by the Oracle field used by Lily, from the sky, I saw a giant fireball approaching.

“Eh, wait——”(Ai)

Ai opened her eyes wide with surprise but she still struggled to get out her restraints.

But, in her sealed state she wasn't able to bring out enough power to get out of my tentacles' grasp. She could only squirm and struggle around like a powerless girl as my tentacles refused to even budge.

That's good, just like that, in the next 5 seconds, [Golden Sun – Aur Soleil] will impact and turn everything to ashes.

Of course, I won't get out of this unhurt either. I'm actually scared whether I'd actually even survive that but I really don't want to go down along with her.

While knowing that my [Anchor Hand]'s binding ability will fall, I turned it into thinner wires and at the same time began to retreat away from Ai at max speed where the fireball was going to land.

The remaining time is around 3 seconds. I want to get atleast 50m away from the centre of the explosion. As expected, I wouldn't have a chance of surviving if I was only 4m away from her.

I ran and ran, without turning back, as fast as I could. I don't know how much distance was I able to create but I didn't stop my legs wanting to take as many steps away from that as possible.

“—!?!”

And, finally the golden shining second sun reached the earth, and exploded.

A blinding flash spread all over and even though I closed my eyes instantly, I could still feel the incredible flash even with my eyelids closed.

That wasn't all. As if that light was trying to burn my body whole, an extreme heat enveloped my body.

“Hot—-!!”

Probably due to the impact and shockwaves, I was being blown away in the air. I felt the sky and the ground, and all directions rotating around and reversing around me.

Thanks to the full power Oracle Field used by Lily, I didn't feel the impact of crashing back on the earth.—-but that was only what happened just a second ago.

I had been able to block the strongest impact and damage but the Oracle Field had already disappeared from it.

“GuuaaaaahhhhH!!!

Heat and shockwaves ran through my whole body but they weren't fatal. I still had ways to defend myself.

Since it was decided that I'd be facing the [Golden Sun – Aur Soleil] at a close range, Fiona had give me a rare magic item for defensive use called [Protection of the Blue Flame – NanaBlast Amulet].

It's effect was to greatly reduce damage caused by flames. Fiona was able to use her [Aur Soleil] even at close range to barely survive.

But still, since I wasn't even 50m away from the centre of explosion, it could barely protect my body from the immense heat passing through, no a normal person would not have been able to tolerate this level of heat.

“Aaaaah——“

The [NanaBlast Amulet] inside my chest pocket was releasing a deep blue light and was showing an incredible amount of defensive ability.

But, this is bad, too dangerous, I don't think I'll be able to bare this any longer.

Even my robe [Baphomet's Embrace], that had protected me till now, caught fire.

It had already become damaged after my fight with Cyprus but due to the waves released by the [Aur Soleil], its magic has finally run out of strength.

While protecting my body till the very end from the heat, the robe began to lose colour from the cuff and started turning to ashes.

If the robe also disappeared, even if my body had been greatly enhanced by countless experiments, I don't think I'd be able to withstand this sweltering heat.

Basically, the moment my [Baphomet's Embrace] began to turn to ashes, my death was also being confirmed.

Shit! Please hold out, just a few more seconds, withstand it!! While bearing through the immense heat attacking my whole body I strongly prayed.

And finally, the Demon's Embrace left me——-

Chapter 146 - Element Master Vs The 8th Apostle (3)

I'm alive.

I didn't get any fatal wounds nor did any of my limbs get blown off. No physical defects either. I can move my body somewhat.

"Guh, uu....."

Inside the dense cloud of black smoke, I stood back up by putting power in my creaking body.

Since the dust had yet to settle, my vision is still blocked but I can ascertain atleast my own looks.

Fuck. My [Baphomet's Embrace] has completely disappeared.

Right now I only have a black shirt with no enchantments whatsoever and my leather trousers. My outfit is no different from a normal villager right now.

In this one attack, my black robe took more damage that it could handle and turned to ashes.

"Thanks, for being with me till now."

After founding it in that treasure box at Lily's hut, it was my partner that had been with me for the past 3 months so I decided to send it off with a word of gratitude.

Fulfilling its job as my defence till the very last moment, if I did not have my [Baphomet's Embrace], I would have died there.

"So.....how did it go?"

Although slightly burned, I stood back up to my feet and looked forward.

The cloud of dust began to disperse with the blowing winds and my visibility became clearer.

I had been blown away quite a lot of distance due to the explosion's shock waves. Now then, what happened to the 8th Apostle Ai who was at the centre of that explosion——

“.....What the hell is that?”

As the black smoke finally settled, I could see the 100m crater that was a proof of the immense explosive force of that magic.

I was also inside it and there was nothing to block me from seeing directly towards the centre of that crater.

And, I definitely saw a lump of something black there.

“Is that a monster?”

As I went a little closer, that black lump, no, that black object that was burnt completely was apparently something like that of a lion.

Since it was in a crouching like position, I couldn't make out its actual size but it seems bigger than atleast 10m in size.

What the hell is that thing? What happened to Ai? Is that monster Ai herself?

As I considered various possibilities, I took out my [HaraRetsu] just in case and took a stance.

“Kurono! Are you alright!!?”(lily)

And from the outer side of the crater, Lily's shouting voice came towards me.

Since I can't hear Fiona, she must have already collapsed due to over use of magical energy.

“I'm fine and still alive!”(kurono)

Lily, who was still in her girl form, appeared. She seemed somewhat sooty, probably because she used her Oracle Field to protect me and was unable to defend herself.

As Lily ran towards me, at that moment, I saw the mouth of that black monster slightly move.

“It’s still alive!?!”

It was exactly meant as a normal question but,

“—yeah, that was really dangerous.”

I actually got an answer.

“If Tsumiki-chan hadn’t covered me, I would have really died.”

The mouth of the fallen monster suddenly opened up.

From behind those ferocious looking fangs, a single girl appeared.

“I was really surprised. This is the first time someone actually jammed my sealing item.”

With an amused smile, as if nothing major had happened, the 8th Apostle once again stood in front of me.

There were no wounds on her body from the flames. She was pretty much the same when we started.

The only change was that her twintails had now fallen to a normal straight hairstyle.

That means, her seals had been completely removed.

“Kuh, are you kidding……”

The distance between us was around 10m, yet her dense magical energy’s presence was stabbing into my body.

All of her seals now removed, her silver aura was now much thicker and I could even feel some sort of invisible, indescribable pressure as well.

This bad. The fact that we weren’t able to take her down with [Golden Sun – Aur Soleil] was already bad but now that we’ve made an Apostle go fully serious, it has become even worse.

“Run Kurono!”

Just as Lily’s voice resounded, numerous balls of light passed by me and flew towards Ai.

I can't just wait and watch here dumbfounded. For the time being, I began to retreat backwards to take as much distance I could from her.

But the moment I took the first step, Ai took a stance with her worn out bow with a speed that could not be seen by human eyes.

"I won't let you run away. I'll end it with this single shot—"

The balls of light used by Lily approached Ai with high speed. In just the next second, they'll reach and explode.

But in that instant, Ai fired the arrow that had been formed who knows when.

"—[Lux Sagitta] enchant [Ether]."

The arrow fired was the same as the ones she had fired before, or so I thought but, the light around the arrow became blurred, no, it was as if the space around the arrow itself was getting distorted, and I couldn't see it properly.

The [Lux Sagitta] fired with a weird effect was fired, and at the same time her wooden bow also broke.

It was unable to bear the force of the arrow being fired, probably it was actually as worn out as it looked.

As I thought that, finally, the balls of light fired by Lily hit.

While raising huge flashes and clouds of dust, I confirmed Ai standing in the same pose in which she had fired the arrow.

Considering the strength of an Apostle, I doubt she had taken much damage but right now, rather than that, I'm more worried about that arrow she had fired.

"Kuh, her aim is Lily!?"

The [Lux Sagitta] went around me and flew towards Lily who was behind me.

The arrow is blurry and I can't really see it properly but its speed itself isn't very high. I can clearly track it with my eyes.

“Such a slow attack—”(lily)

Lily fired several balls of light to intercept the arrow fired towards her.

A single arrow in itself was a very small target but Lily's attacks that possessed high tracking ability could definitely hit an object that flying directly straight towards her.

As balls of light hit the approaching object one by one, small flashes and explosions were created.

But,

“—No way! Even though it's just a low level magic!!”(lily)

[Lux Sagitta] which was supposed to be just a low level attack magic was continuing on its path without any deviation even in the face of Lily's attacks.

“Dodge it Lily! That attack is dangerous!!”(Kurono)

Ai hadn't fired a normal [Lux Sagitta], I certainly heard her enchant it with 'something' called [Ether].

“!?!”

The moment Lily began to take evasive manoeuvres, as if realizing that, the light arrow began accelerating.

Furthermore, it even made a sharp turn to correct its trajectory towards the direction where Lily flew.

“It has Auto tracking ability as well!?”

This speed, manoeuvring ability; evading was impossible.

The only method left to Lily was,

“Oracle Field Max Power!!”

To defend.

ZUDODODODOO!!

“Lily!!?”

An explosion that was impossible for a normal [Lux Sagitta] occurred.

With a bright flash and waves of destruction, I saw Lily's small body being blown away.

No way, could it be that Lily was—no, calm down. She had all her limbs, and she didn't seem to be bleeding too much either.

Her [Oracle Field] might have been broken but the Ancient Velvet dress around her body should have protected her.

Lily, who had been blown away, crashed on the ground and finally stopped.

There were no responses from her, it could be that she had fainted from the shock.

"It's not the time to be worrying about your Fairy-chan you know? My attack hasn't ended yet."

I soon realized the meaning behind Ai's words as I looked above for a second.

"Wha—"

There, the [Lux Sagitta] that had attacked Lily was now coming towards me while in its same blurred form.

So it didn't end with the explosion that took out Lily. It seems she really intends to end this in a 'single attack'."

"Fuck, Magic Bullet Arts!!"

Holding the baton in my left hand, I fired a storm of magic bullets to intercept that light arrow.

But, as expected there was no effect, and no matter how many bullets hit it, the arrow kept on flying towards me like a missile that had locked-on to its target.

While retreating with max speed, I kept on firing the magic bullets but the distance kept on getting smaller.

It was impossible to evade but can I even get out of this attack alive? It had broken through even Lily's [Oracle Field] easily, my defensive magic was——no, don't give up yet, I have no choice but to do it!!

"Ooooooooo, Black Shield!!"

Holding the baton in front, I deployed my shield with maximum solidity.

I waited for the impact of the approaching [Lux Sagitta] while bracing my legs and standing firm there.

GIYARIRIRI——

Raising a shrilling, uncanny sound, the point of the arrow was being stopped by my black shield.

There was an impact but it didn't explode and like a drill trying to punch open a hole in a wall, the arrow continued to dig into the black shield.

Soon, the arrow broke through the shield as if it was obvious and continued on its path.

The moment my baton [Black Ballista Replica], which was still held in my hand that I had raised in front, came into contact with the 'distortion' of the arrow, it was instantly pulverised and smashed to pieces till the grip portion.

I felt as if I saw each and every splinter of my broken baton fly off in slow motion.

The arrow approached, I had no way of blocking it. What was next was my face, to be exact, it approached towards my eye that gave me my vision to see things.

"Kuhh!!"

Whether it was a reflex or was it done consciously, in that small moment, my right hand moved.

In front of me and the arrow, a black wall, no, the black blade of [HaraRetsu] was put in between and it acted as my very last defence.

GIYARIRI——

The same sound I had heard just a second ago. The arrow kept on pushing on, even when blocked by the blade of the cursed weapon as if not allowing anything to block its path.

It started shaving off, first the coating of black magical energy on the blade. It didn't even last 0.2 seconds.

It continued, next was the blade that held the curse.

[HaraRestu] was a cursed weapon, that means it was also a magic weapon. The blade's hardness that possessed magical energy was so high that it was incomparable to normal steel.

But, even so, it,

BAGINN!!

Was unable to stop this arrow!

“——”

The black blade that possessed the curse of both love and hate was pierced through by the arrow of light.

This time, finally, there was nothing left to me save me any longer.

It couldn't be stopped. There was simply no way of stopping it.

That's why, I could only watch, with this left eye of mine, as the arrow approached it and pierced through it.

DOZUU

“GAHAHAHAHAHAHAHHHHH!!”

The light plunged into my left eye.

It completely pierced through my eyeball. It hurts, I feel intense pain, but—
—it's not something I can't tolerate! I haven't died yet!!

“Ah, Aaaa.....”

The arrow pierced straight into my left eye and stopped there.

Since I can still sense things, it probably didn't reach and pierce through my brain it seems.

But obviously, I have lost half of my vision.

With my right eye that was still functioning, I saw the arrow of light stabbing into my left eye.

I threw away the remains of the [Black ballista Replica] in my hand and grabbed the arrow.

The enchant that distorted the space around it had already disappeared. Also, even though it's made of light, I can definitely grab it like a normal object and there was no heat either.

Rather than [Lux Sagitta] it was more closer to those [Stakes – Sagitta] used by Sariel.

“Uu Ooooooooohh!!”

Shaking off the slight hesitation in me, I pulled out the arrow.

Inside my left eye, there was a sensation of something grinding and being torn and a sensation of my eye socket becoming slightly expanding instantly. Neither of them were things I wanted to feel ever again.

“Guuoo.....oo.....”

I pulled out the light arrow along with the eyeball that it had pierced into.

“Haa.....haa.....”

I didn't really feel like seeing my own eyeball stuck on the arrow so I quickly threw it away.

I unconsciously filled the eye socket that had become empty with my jelly-like black magical energy [Flesh Compensation] and pressed it together to make it compensate for the missing eyeball.

That's just simple flesh though, it was only meant to close the wound. Just like putting a glass ball inside there, it won't give me my sight back.

“Haa.....”

But what I need to think about right now is not my lost left eye but the enemy that's still standing in front of me, Ai.

With just my right eye, I glared at Ai who had come right in front of me who knows when.

"Sorry, I became a bit too serious there."(Ai)

Sticking out her small tongue slightly, Ai gave a somewhat embarrassed expression, like a child whose prank had been found out by someone.

At this distance, my [Hararetsu] should reach her which hasn't broken yet though it does have a hole from the arrow.

But, I can't move. My right hand that was holding the hatchet didn't move at all.

I haven't gone mad. Even at such a distance, there is no timing, no opening to attack at all.

Shit! Move! I don't mind even if I take her down with me. I'll attack!

Lily has fainted, Fiona is out of magical energy. I am the only one who can still fight!

"Don't glare at me like that. This battle was Devil-san, no Kurono-kun and the other's victory."(ai)

"What are you planning?....."

"Nothing at all. My bow broke after all."

Putting both of her hands in the front she fluttered her palms. Her actions were really comical like a child.

"I never said that we'll continue this battle till either one of us died. Kurono-kun and the others don't want to die for no reason either right? Or rather, I was saved by Tsumiki-chan as well so I technically lost for breaking the rules as well, or something like that?"

I could only blink my eyes and breathe right now.

I was unable to even agree or even nod to her words.

“fufufu, I really thought I’d die in today’s battle. Tsumiki-chan also died. It was quite Hard Mode battle but I had fun.”(ai)

As if thanking me, Ai clapped my shoulder.

I reflexively shook her hand off.

“Nn mouu, don’t be so angry! But I’ll forgive you, you three worked really hard after all, that’s why—”(ai)

That moment, a silver aura gushed out of Ai mixed with extreme killing intent.

“—Don’t you dare lay a hand on them Misa.”(ai)

That killing intent was not towards me, but towards someone else, right, I realized it now that someone else was standing right behind me.

“It looked like you were having a tough battle so I came to help you, you know?”

“Wh, who is it?.....”(kuroono)

As I turned to look back, a woman I had never seen was standing there.

“11th Apostle Misa, the great me shall kill you so be grateful alright!?”

Another new Apostle was standing there.

Chapter 147 - Pitiful Winners

(PoV is 3rd person)

The girl with wavy light pink hair,

“11th Apostle Misa, the great me shall kill you so be grateful alright!?”

Said that to Kurono with a face brimming with confidence.

“The 11th Apostle, you say.....”

An already impossible situation had occurred when an Apostle had arrived but now another one of those Apostles had come here. He couldn't keep up with the situation.

But, without minding such a Kurono, the 2 Apostles began to talk.

“I'm telling you not to lay a hand on them, didn't I? Just go back obediently Misa.”(ai)

“Haa? Are you serious? Why do I have to let some demons get away alive? As an Apostle, if you see them you're supposed to deal with them at that very instant right?”(misa)

“My God didn't say anything like that to me.”

Killing intent and magical energy flew from both sides suddenly.

It was an explosive situation. Kurono who knew he had no way of facing a fully serious Apostle could simply shut his mouth and stand their while holding his breath.

“Well fine. I'll give you face since you're my senpai here.”(misa)

After a few seconds of time, Misa pulled back and the situation calmed down.

“So, why is Misa here?”(Ai)

“nfufu, there were people who wanted to borrow my power you see. Not Sariel but me. They pleaded me to help me no matter what!”(misa)

Fun, Misa puffed her chest with pride. Her chest was much bigger in volume than Sariel's and were pretty good.

"Even pigs can flatter—no, so, what's that request? Did you finish it already?"(ai)

"Well it was supposed to be finished after I killed that uncivilised looking guy and those two girls lying around here and there but since Ai senpai said to not do so no matter what, I'll stop here."(misa)

"fun, so your job was—"(ai)

"Yup, to annihilate all demons who were crossing this road!"(misa)

As Ai gave a pretty weak reaction since she expected that, Kurono froze the moment he heard that.

("She, just what did she say just now? Annihilate? The demons who were crossing through this road?.....That means.....")

"Say, that man over there seems to be glaring at me right now—"(misa)

In Kurono's line of sight, Misa's figure had already disappeared, no, he only felt that it had disappeared.

It was not something like teleportation, she had simply moved too fast. It was just a simple movement.

And, Misa who had moved way beyond Kurono's perception,

"Gohaah!?"

Smashed her hard heel into his abdomen.

As Misa's kick smashed deep into him, Kurono's body flew in the air.

"He's irritating me, should I kill him after all?"(misa)

He finally fell face fist to the ground.

Since he was lying face down he could only see the ground but he knew that currently a blade was being pushed against his neck.

"I just said that's not allowed. Now c'mon, quickly put away your armament scriptures already."(Ai)

“Tche, killjoy!”

The sensation of the blade disappeared from his neck.

In its place, Misa’s heel pushed stabbed into Kurono’s back.

Although he was simply being casually trampled upon, the attack from an Apostle’s power and a mithril heel was similar to having a hammer being smashed into him.

“Gah.....ha.....”

Holding on to his consciousness that felt like it’d fly away beyond the horizons, Kurono held onto his awareness.

“Or rather, won’t it be bad if you move around so freely here? Pandora is under Sariel-chan’s control. They won’t allow the intervention of another Apostle right?(Ai)

“You really are talking as this doesn’t concern you at all.”(misa)

“I’ll be fine. That geezer Pope, that Hero wannabe second Apostle as well as God will completely forgive me ‘kay?”(Ai)

“I am definitely not convinced with that!!”(misa)

“Yeah yeah, I’ll hear your complains if I feel like it later so let’s return for now.”(Ai)

Misa didn’t try to hide her dissatisfied expression but she complied with Ai’s words.

“I guess that’s true. If I am not allowed to kill these ones, then there’s no reason to stay here any longer.”(misa)

As Misa snapped her fingers, a white magic circle appeared in an instant with just that.

Kurono who was still lying down couldn’t see that but Ai knew what effect that magic circle possessed in a single glance.

“A Griffon familiar servant!”(Ai)

As Ai’s sparkled, in front of her a monster with the upper body of an Eagle and lower body of a lion was summoned.

Its size was obviously much bigger than both normal eagles or lions.

The 10m large Griffon certainly gave off a monster like ferocity but its pure white feathers and fur also gave it a sublime divine-like presence as well.

It was truly befitting for a mount of an Apostle that had been granted the Divine Protection of their God.

“So nice! I’ll also make my next Tsumiki-chan a Griffon rather than a Chimaera. Oof!”(Ai)

“Right, it’s nice right, my Griffon—wait, don’t climb on it on your own!?(misa)

Disregarding the summoner Misa, she tried to hold down Ai who was trying to climb on top of it.

“eeeh, it’s fine if you let me ride it, or rather let me ride it! It’s fine even if its just till Alsace village.”(Ai)

“Where the heck is this Alsace Village.....fine, Ai-senpai will sit behind me! Come on, let go of the reins already!”(misa)

The two girls squabbled over the luxurious stirrup of the Griffon, they really seemed to be having fun but,

(“What the fuck, is this.....Don’t fucking mess with me.....”)

It had already become a disgusting memory for him.

“Wa, wait.....8th Apostle Ai.”

Putting his strength, Kurono raised his body.

He shouted towards Ai who seemed like she’d fly away any moment in this evening sky.

“What happened to the others! Weren’t you going to let them run away!!”

Ai showed a quite surprised expression towards Kurono who had stood up once again but she quickly answered with an impish smile.

“ahahaha, sorry, it seems, they ended up dying. Moth those refugee demons as well as those adventurers, right?”(ai)

As Ai struck Misa's shoulder, she opened her mouth in an irritated fashion.

"Ah, un, one week ago some villager like demons had come in hordes so I did exterminate them all. Also, those ones who were going by those carriages were quite tenacious. I really got irritated, seriously." (misa)

"Well, that's how it is so too bad even though you fought so hard. Work harder next time as well!" (Ai)

It was a cruel truth pushed upon Kurono.

He couldn't reject it as a joke. After all, he knew the strength of the Apostles.

The 6 days he had fought after trying and fighting so hard against the Crusaders; even though the refugees were already dead when they were fighting—

".....wha."

And, even the adventurers he had fought with, while he had been going along with this ridiculous game of this Apostle was killed by another ridiculous Apostle.

"No, way....."

Power left Kurono's body.

The cursed hatchet that he gripped so tightly had already fallen to the ground.

"If we were to meet again, I'll face you again. I won't lose next time though! Now then Kurono-kun Bye bye!" (ai)

Till the very end, leaving behind nonchalant words, the 2 Apostles finally left.

The giant white Griffon disappeared into the evening red sky.

The only one left was the pitifully victor of the battle against the 8th Apostle Ai.

"No way.....it's a lie, right?"

Chapter 148 - Alsace Village Occupied

At the Alsace Village HQ, in one of the rooms of the building that was once the Village Head's house, the 2 Apostles, Norz, and the direct subordinate of the 8th Apostle, Sister Sylvia were currently gathered.

In front of the 2 heavenly Apostles, Norz was bowing his head but his expression was rotten as if he had just swallowed an insect.

".....Thank you very much for your help in the annihilation of the demons, 11th Apostle Lord Misa."(norz)

But only the words of gratitude were allowed to leave his mouth.

Even if they

"Like I said, I'm going back already!"(misa)

"Isn't it fine! They prepared even meals for us specially. Come and eat with us ~"(Ai)

Were chattering among themselves and not listening to anything Norz was saying.

"No way. I'm not going to eat something prepared by this shabby occupation army in this remote region."(misa)

"Eh, bread and soup is really delicious though? Much better than portable food provisions!"(Ai)

"Your eating habits are too poor for an Apostle! We are special existences chosen by God, that's why we need to live more specially than normal people!"(misa)

"You're talking like a noble."(Ai)

"We ARE nobles! The title of 'Lord' isn't just for show!!"(misa)

"I didn't really get a court rank—"(Ai)

As their talks continued endlessly, Norz was left to wait in stiffened state.

He glanced towards Sylvia who was also waiting beside him, to check her appearance but,

“.....”

With a gentle smile, she was listening attentively to the conversation between her master and Misa.

It seems Sylvia had no intention to stop their useless conversation either.

As a result, after almost 30mins had passed, their chatting finally ended as Misa left after refusing Ai's invitation to join her for the meal.

“—then, you mean to say that you intentionally let that ‘Devil’ run away alive?”(norz)

Finally, Norz was able to know the details of the situation.

“Yup, also the fairy Lily-chan and the witch Fiona-chan as well.”(Ai)

“I..see.....”(Norz)

After the fateful incident at Irz, and finally, the Devil Kurono who had made victim of a lot of soldiers of their whole squad was left alive, was a fact to which Norz simply could not readily agree to but he simply could not yell at an Apostle.

Norz who had served in the army for a very long time, was perfectly aware not to be foolish enough to reject their superior's instructions.

“nfufu, sorry Sylvia -chan, for leaving you alone for such a long time.”(Ai)

“No, it's fine Master, as long as you return like this.....”(Sylvia)

Even though Misa had finally left, now Ai and Sylvia had started flirting around with each other but even then, Norz had no authority to complain.

Why two women were.....it was stupid to even think about it. Looking at Ai who was playing around with Sylvia with a manner of hands that would put even the most perverted of geezers to shame, he realized that she swung that way from the very start.

“I humble apologise but can you please let me confirm some more of the details?”(norz)

Choosing the timing, just when those two ended their passionate actual lover-like kiss, he asked again.

“Nn? There was still something left?”(Ai)

“It was Bishop Gregorius that deployed 11th Apostle Misa, is that correct?”(norz)

“Yup, since she said ‘grego-somethin’, there’s only old man Gregorius among those in Pandora that matches that description.”(ai)

Ai answered while groping Sylvia’s bountiful chest. Ignoring that action altogether, Norz confirmed his thoughts in his mind.

“I see, so by reinforcements, Bishop Gregorius meant an Apostle.....”(norz)

As he muttered that,

“Nn, is that it, is that the place!”(ai)

“Ah, please stop Master, anymore than this is.....”(Sylvia)

He realized that he could not get any more info from Ai whose dumbness was at max power.

There were famous rumours in the streets of the Republic that the 8th Apostle went around wandering all over the place while defeating monsters and punishing corrupt merchants and government officials here and there. Of course, Norz was also aware of that.

Even though she was never in Elysion, the fact that she knows about every high ranking clergyman dispatched to Pandora means that many other subordinates like Sylvia have been dispatched at every place.

Subordinates like Sylvia who wore a nun’s habit over their voluptuous bodies.

Seriously, it was outrageous.

“Well, Misa was the one who did it, most of the demons who ran away must have been killed surely. With this the occupation army’s mission is also over, right?”(Ai)

“.....yes.”(norz)

As Norz showed a somewhat dissatisfied expression, Ai gave a slight warning while licking Sylvia’s white nape of the enck.

“You’re not allowed to chase after Kuro-no-kun, ‘kay?”(Ai)

“I..Understand.”(Norz)

As Ai declared that Kuro-no and the other two would probably reach the neighbouring Spada much easily if they were not ‘hindered’ any further, Norz only became more and more dissatisfied.

But since he could never speak angrily to her, and he had heard everything he wanted to, Norz decided to take his leave as fast as possible from here.

“8th Apostle Ai-sama, thank you for your cooperation. Please leave the rest to us.”(Norz)

“Nn, oh right, I need to return the commanding authority back as well. I’ll leave tomorrow morning again so after that old man, you’ll be the in-charge again.”(Ai)

“Very well.”(Norz)

Indicating that there is nothing else to talk about, Ai stood up from her seat.

Thinking that tonight she could have fun, Ai began to leave the room while linking arms with Sylvia tightly but stopped once again before the door and turned back.

“Oh right right, you’ll probably be scolded by the ‘higher ups’ for losing so many men in capturing just a small village but just tell them that you were facing a guy that could defeat even the 8th Apostle, alright? Well, I doubt they’ll believe you though. See ya!”(Ai)

And this time finally, she left the room.

Norz who alone was left in the room stood up as well and drew his mace from his waist.

“Bullshit!!”

He swung it down directly on the seat on which the Apostle was sitting just a few seconds ago.

In any case, on the 6th of Hatsu-bi, with the occupation of Alsace village, the Crusaders had finally taken control over all of Daedalus territory.

Chapter 149 – The Survivors

The sun had already disappeared along the ridgelines of Galahad Mountain Range, and night had come upon.

Normally there wouldn't be anyone who would walk in the dark roads here, but right now there were 3 shadows walking silently while a faint light was shining around them.

Kurono had been walking with his eyes cast down, Lily and Fiona walking behind couldn't find words to say to him.

The three consumed the last potion to replenish their stamina for walking, soon after replenishing, they had started walking.

Their destination was, the place where adventurers were attacked by 11th Apostle.

If Misa's words were truth, there should be traces of fight remaining on the road.

It hadn't been more than half day since the queue of carriages carrying adventurers ran away, leaving Kurono and others, it could be predicted, the place of attack was not too far.

And, Kurono couldn't help but confirm it.

(My feet, are getting heavy.....)

The Kurono right now had stopped thinking anything.

*What happened to the adventurers, what happened to the refugees, what to do from now on, what will it become from now on—*He had stopped thinking all this, just earnestly concentrated and moved forward.

Even so in the depths of his heart, faintly but surely the worst premonition • prediction, tried to torment his heart.

Hence Kurono walked, unless he confirmed the truth with his own eyes he couldn't do anything else.

How much time would have passed since walking, it probably hadn't been that long, finally on the road which felt like an eternity long to Kurono, he saw the end of it, the answer.

“.....!”

Upon being shined by Lily's light ball instead of flame, a quadrilateral in far distance reflected in Kuroono's eyes.

To Kuroono with eyes enhanced like that of an nocturnal animal, he could not make any mistake when seeing in the dark.

The moment he recognised the square/rectangular something, Kuroono ran up to it.

"Ah, Kuroono!"

"Kuroono-san——"

He couldn't listen their voices, he couldn't remain still without confirming, even if, the worst conclusion was waiting for him.

"Ah, Aaah....."

That was without a doubt the wreckages of the carriages.

Without a mistake, it was the carriage they had created in a hurry for escaping, not even painted a carriage made of rough wood was broken in many parts.

The rear part was reflecting in Kuroono's eyes, the front part was in wrecks, as though an iron ball had hit it.

"Th-This is....."

In front of it, toppled in the same way, broken in several places, many wreckages of carriage were spread out.

And, from the other side of still dark road, came the smell of blood which he had gotten accustomed to in past few days.

The thing that came in Kuroono's mind, was neither the faces of reliable adventurers, neither the faces of hateful Crusaders, nor the faces of absurd apostles.

It was the scene of Village of Irz burning, just that came up in his mind.

That hell, where everything was too late, he couldn't save anyone.

Right now, there were neither burned houses or families, neither the friends who were crucified.

But here was, the scenery of despair, just like of the now destroyed Village of Irz.

"This is.....too much....."

Kurono walked with unsteady feet, but finally his will power exhausted and his knees gave up on that spot.

In front of his eyes, inside the craters of various sizes, the mowed down trees, the traces of the violent fight were spread out.

Which sort of heroic battle started here, there was no way of understanding it now, but the thing he knew was,

“Everyone.....is dead.....”

the fact, adventurers were annihilated cruelly.

He saw corpses of people he knew, scattered here and there.

In one conspicuously big crater, one had been sewn inside the ground by the large fang sword struck in his chest, the person with big frame was Vulcan.

『Fang Blade • Evil Eater』 which had pierced through the heart directly, was still being held on the hilt tightly by the right hand which had been cut off from elbow.

On the roadside was a black worn-out cloth lying down, if the wand modeled with skull was not lying besides it one couldn't make out it was Morzun.

Whether he had taken a lot damage, or whether crushed by something big, from tip of toe to the top of head every bone was pulverised in very small pieces, there was no more the face of skull, it was absolutely impossible to identify him.

The 3 corpses lying on the toppled down trees as though they were leaning, were without a doubt of the 3 sisters from 『3 Hunting Princesses』 .

To a distant person it would look like three people were joining hands in an horizontal line, in truth their palms were pierced through by arrows, so their hands were forcibly joined together.

The three had their heads cut off cleanly, because the three had the same equipments and physique, He couldn't understand who was whom.

He didn't had any willpower to find the freshly severed head which could have been lying somewhere.

“What the heck.....don't fuck with me, just what is this.....why did this thing——”

The more he looked the more bodies, corpses, remains he saw, all blood-drenched, there was not even one with complete body, he could easily feel the evilness of killer, it was an Over-Kill.

But, even in those scattered and gory corpses, from the body features, clothes, equipments, he could make out who is whom, he was made to know it.

Though it hadn't been more than a month, but there was no way he would forget the people who ate and slept with him, fought with him on the battlefield.

That's why, he accepted their deaths without having any doubts.

It's a lie, It can't happen, It can't be true, any objection was meaningless.

Now only did Kurono knew the truth, that the 11th Apostle Misa, really 'annihilated all the demons passing this road'.

"We didn't fight for something like this!!"

Along with screams the flowing tears, run along the cheeks and fall on the ground like a rain.

"Damn it! Fuck off! Once again I——"

Kurono crouched as though he were rejecting the reality spread around the place,

"——Once again I couldn't protect anyone....."

He couldn't help but cry the tears of regret.

But even if he regretted, he couldn't get the answer to what he should have done.

Let it be invasion of Crusaders, defensive battle of Alsace, surprise attack of experiments, attack of apostles, he and his friends all face against all them things with full devotion.

However, it all ended up as nothing, wasted effort, wasted fight, and, wasted death.

What had gone wrong, what shouldn't they have done, what should had been done, can the end be reached without this disaster waiting for them?

The answer couldn't come out, it never will.

Even if got hold of the answer, it would simply added to his regret list, it couldn't help to change the reality in front of him.

Inside the mind of Kurono who had fallen in the circle of those thoughts, a flash ran through it.

That gave him the absolute simple and clear solution, to the answer which shouldn't had gotten an answer.

".....I was weak, huh"

That answer was, 『Power』 .

What if, he had the power to kill many thousands many millions of Crusaders?

What if, he had power to kill apostles?

"If I was more strong, had more power, nobody needed to die"

The moment he arrived at that answer, Kurono was tormented by the true regret.

He couldn't forgive himself for bringing a situation which couldn't be reversed, he recognised it as a sin which couldn't be repented for in his life. No matter what sort of radical reason it was, to Kurono it was the only truth.

"I see, everyone died because of me"

The thing, occupying Kurono's heart was,

"Ha, Hahaha.....I see, I now understand, all of it, was my fault, I was wrong——"

Without a doubt 『Despair』

"Kurono!"

At that moment, a light came near Kurono.

The moment a rainbow-colored phosphorescence reflected in his right eye, a warm, soft, small thing jumped on Kurono's body.

"Kurono is not wrong! You tried hard! Really hard! Harder than anyone else!"

".....Lily"

Clinging to Kurono's chest, having tears swelling up in the corner of her eyes, shouting positive words, was the small Lily.

"Kurono, you have protected me!

I am alive, you have protected me, I am alive!

That's why, you're not wrong!"

Though they were clumsy words, but, those words certainly insert a line of hope inside Kurono's heart filled with despair.

"Lily.....Thank you"

That light, was not the miracle to change the reality in front of him.

Kurono was very near to the kill himself by swinging the last weapon he had left, 『Cursed Grudge hatchet 「HaraRetsu」 』

However, within Lily's words was the power to stop the foot of Kurono who was about to be engulfed in despair.

A little bit, calmness returned to him.

"I'm fine, that's why.....don't cry"

"Yea, Yeah! Lily, won't cry!"

Kurono hugged Lily tightly, who had sank her head on Kurono's chest, which only had a thin shirt now.

The small warmth he felt near his chest, gave Kurono back his calmness, and willpower to once again stand back up.

".....Let's search for survivors"

While holding Lily near his chest, Kurono stood back up.

Leaving all the sorrow, grief, regret, repentance for a later date, he started to move for completing what he had to do.

"Oi! Is there anyone alive!"

Facing the darkness spread out in the surrounding, he yelled out loud.

Anyone, even if 1 person, if there was any person alive, they have to save them.

It didn't even need thinking, the thing they had to do right now, was to search for survivors and rescue them.

"Oii! Oii! Anyone! Reply!!"

It's useless, no one can be alive after fighting an apostle——That thought, forcibly swelled up inside the corner of his mind.

If he just stood there the negative feelings will only return back, but, there was no time to stop, to be in despair, to be discouraged, saying that Kurono desperately tried to cheer himself up.

"Oo——i!!"

Kurono started walking to search for survivors, while holding Lily who was still grumbling 'I'm not crying'.

“—『Torch』 ไลท์・アップ して 照らす 魔法 ”

At that moment, the surroundings near Kurono suddenly lit up.

Upon looking, he saw many fireballs falling down while burning brightly from dozens of metres above in sky.

Like a flare, the space around the fireballs was illuminated.

“I thought it would be easy to search when bright.”

Fiona who appeared from behind like a shadow had, her favorite staff 『Ainz Broom』 held in her hands.

“It helps, Thank you”

Seeing Kurono smile, Fiona felt relieved without changing her expression.

Fiona with zero friends, didn't know the correct words to say at that time.

She left the decisions to Lily, thanks to that Kurono got back the willpower, finally she felt relieved because she could talk to him again.

“By the way, is there any magic for searching a person?”

Fiona was about to smile, but hearing Kurono's words she returned her poker face, and replied to the question

“The bloodlust or magical power can be searched within a certain range”

“No, even I can do that, or perhaps I should say, a person with serious wounds or is on the verge of dying can't emit a presence like that”

Even the amazed gaze of Kurono, was somewhat comfortable for Fiona.

She once again realizes that she was quite unstable upon seeing the Kurono's previous state.

“I'm sorry, but I haven't learnt any magic for searching feeble presences of magical power”

“I see, then what about a magic to increase the loudness of voice?”

“I haven't learnt that too”

“Can't be helped then, I can only search steadily now. Thank you for lighting the area.”

Thanks to that, a larger area of disaster could be seen, but Kurono was trying hard to not realize much.

“Ooi! If anyone is alive, reply please!”

And, the moment he yelled out,

SFX: Katan—-(Rattle)

Certainly, a sound resounded

“Is anyone over there!?”

As though it were replying Kurono’s voice, this time even more clearer sound resounded.

That came from the wreckage of carriage, turned upside down.

The canopy had been completely destroyed by the weight of the carriage, but someone was within the small gap between the frame of carriage and ground, trying to come out from there.

After finding out the source of voice, Kurono dropped Lily as though he were throwing her and ran up to the broken carriage.

“Oi! Are you there!?”

While shouting, he lifted up the broken carriage by putting his hands in the gap between it and ground.

Kurono had superhuman strength due to remodelling enhancement, without even using support magic or enhancement martial skills, though he couldn’t easily pick the whole wooden carriage, but he could incline it easily.

“Are you alright!?”

He thought to call out to Fiona for taking out the person, but before he had a chance to do that, the person pinned under the carriage crawled out on its own strength.

“.....Is it you, Onii-san?”

The person who came out was, The Sniping Alchemist, Simon.

Instead of his favorite sniper rifle 『Yatagarasu』, he held a dark red colored gem in his hands.

“Simon!? It’s good, you are fine——”

From the shape of Simon, though his clothes were very dirty, but his hands and legs only had some traces of bruises or scars, there was no fatal injury on him.

Seeing there was no danger to life, Kurono felt relieved.

“.....It is not good”

He sat down on the ground, with face cast downwards. Kurono wasn't able to see clearly the expression of Simon thanks to his ashen colored hair.

But, that voice was certainly trembling.

"It is not at all good.....everyone is, everyone is dead, they were all killed by that person."

"Simon.....it will be good if you don't think that right now"

The moment he said such words while crouching, Simon raised his head up. In the same Emerald eyes like Lily, large drops of tears were swelling up.

"Susu died while protecting me! I can't do that! I can't help but think, that person, always, to me——"

As though it were a ruby, Simon hugged the red stone tightly. Kurono immediately understood the identity of the stone.

That was, the core of a slime.

It was the source of life of Susu, who was a rank 4 thief, and was the spotter of Simon.

"I-I couldn't do anything.....I was so afraid, of that person.....I only got protected till the end.....Uuuuuuuuuu!"

As if the barrier was broken, Simon starting crying heavily.

"I'm sorry.....I'm sorry, I couldn't protect anyone"

Kurono, tightly held the slender body of Simon.

Just like how Lily did it for him, some moments before.

"Kuuuu.....Why, Why must someone like me.....be alive....."

"Dont say anymore! I'm really grateful that you are alive, really!"

"B, But....."

"It's okay, right now be happy that you survived, I'm really happy that you are fine, Simon."

From then, Simon kept on crying silently while being hugged by Kurono.

Even Kurono who was cheering up Simon, didn't had his heart completely healed, even while holding the small body, the negative feeling were spreading inside his heart.

"——Kurono"

At that moment, the sharp voice of Lily stopped the jumbled thought process, and returned him back to reality.

“What happened Lily?”

Lily’s appearance was still of a small child, but just from having his name called, Kurono understood her consciousness had changed to that of adult. He won’t ask for what reason did she changed her consciousness. He didn’t even need to think, because if she used 『Queen Beryl』’s power more than the time limit, then it meant the situation was bad that she couldn’t help but regain her consciousness.

“Look at that”

She was looking towards the Galahad Mountain Range in far distance, with grave eyes which couldn’t be seen in her child form.

Kurono released the body of Simon, stood besides Lily, and looked towards the same direction.

“That is——”

There was, queues of light torches spread here and there.

There wasn’t any other explanation other than. ‘someone’ lit the torches and was walking the road in night in a queue.

“——Is it the, pursuit squad of Crusaders!?”

“But, if they came, then it will be from behind, right?”

Lily’s point was right.

Kurono immediately understood, that the Crusaders can never come from the direction of Galahad Mountain Range.

“So is it the queue of refugees? No, that is going the other way——”

“Err, Lily-san.....”

Before he knew it, Simon stood besides him after crying out to his heart’s extent.

“What?”

Seeing Lily’s sharp gaze, he was faltered a bit, but suddenly replied.

“Can you try using your light magic for seeing in far distance”

“That’s right, we have confirm what it is, by our own eyes.”

After completing the chant, a transparent lens formed in her hands, just like the one she had used when scout party was intercepted in Village of Irz.

Simon and Kurono look through the lens simultaneously, and start observing the group approaching from the other side of dark road.

“I can’t see it clearly.....”

Even through lens, maybe because of darkness, Simon couldn’t see anything other than darkness and the light of torches carried by group.

But, in the right eye of Kurono which worked in the dark, it was clearly reflected.

“—They don’t seem like either Crusaders or Villagers too”

Through the lens, Kurono saw a armored-figure of a knight straddling on a horse.

It was completely different from the attire of Crusaders, it was a different army.

However, because there was no person with large build like that of beast person or golem, so everyone was of the size of human, but because it was made up of all humans the possibility of the army being of Crusaders cannot be rejected.

“Onii-san, can you see the crest on the flag?”

“crest? Hm.....Yeah, it is, I can see it”

“Tell me what design does it has!”

Squinting his eyes, Kurono observed the two flags held up by the knights.

He felt relieved seeing on both of them, Cross was not drawn.

And he realized that both flags had different crests drawn on them.

“On one flag, crown and sword are intersecting each other, on the other, a helmet, shield, and spear are drawn. Do you know it, Simon?”

“Yeah, without a doubt, it is the army of Spada.”

Just for a moment, a sigh of admiration leaked out, he recalled the fact he sent a messenger to Spada for reinforcements.

If they were coming in this situation, did it mean they were really reinforcements?

“No, wait, will Spada really try to save us?”

That line didn’t seem like, it came from the guy who said to run to Spada, but in front of a completely armed army, that worry is only normal.

More than anything Spada was an enemy nation for Pandora, in the first place even if they accepted the refugees but for what reason, with an army in front he couldn’t help but worry.

“It’s alright, we can talk our way through that squad, ah, Onii-san, just to be sure, is the person walking in lead of that squad in more heavy equipments than others?”

“Nh.....Yeah, certainly, only one person is equipped with heavy equipments.”

Even after using Lily’s lens, he could only see the silhouette, not the details, but he could still make out the appearance of knight was different from others.

The knight walking in lead, was without a doubt the leader.

He was equipped with the trademark of a heavy knight, the halberd and tower shield.

Naturally, the heavy knight himself too was suitably tall, compared from the knights following him on both sides, his head was more taller.

Other knights were, equipped with a charge lance with short hilt and long bade, though their shields were large but compared to the toughness of Tower Shield, they were no where to be counted, their armor too seemed thin compared to the one of leader.

Kurono told everything he saw to Simon.

“Yeah, those guys are certainly, Spada’s Army’s Second Squad 『Tempest』 , don’t worry, they will rescue us.”

To Simon making a relieved face, naturally he asked question.

“Do you know about armies of Spada?”

Upon saying that, Simon hesitated a little, but then talked honestly.

“Yeah, the heavy knight leading 『Tempest』 is my elder sister” [ET: One note for readers, pls don’t get too elated that she would be in his harem or not, because as you know this KnM is like Game of Thrones, if you get what I mean.]

He did say, because of obligation, but hearing all this Kurono couldn’t help but keep his mouth hanging open with amazement.

“Ah err, it isn’t like I was hiding, but there were some circumstances, I myself am not a soldier of Spada—A,Anyhow, It will be fine”

There were a lot of things to ask, but for the time being the ‘help’ from Spada came,

“I see, we will be saved.....”

Kurono finally realized that long fight had reached it's end.

The long fight of Alsace came to an end, with only 4 survivors and utter defeat.



Kuro No Maou

- Volume 10 -

The Demon King and The Hero

Chapter 150 – The Crawling White Shadow

The Media Ruins, are located about 10 kilometres from capital city of Daedalus, it was a dungeon with a rank 4 difficulty level.

Media ruins which was a large underground space recently revealed a new area, but due to the invasion of Crusaders the activities of adventurers was stopped, and the area was still left untouched.

For about 1 month from the fall of capital city of Daedalus, adventurer guild completely stopped their activities.

And, of course, because it was being ruled by Crusaders who don't allow freedom to demons, it was right now too, no, the activities of adventurers of Daedalus has been prohibited for eternity.

Hence, near Media ruins which used to have some adventurers roaming around it, right now not even a single adventurer was near it.

But however, this place was crowded by many people, even more than the number of adventurers who used to work here.

They all are humans, wearing a set of clothes with cross symbol on the white cloth, they are without a doubt, Crusaders.

The majority of them, were paying attention to the new area of Media ruins. Because, there was something they were looking for.

“Hmm so this, I'm sorry, though I know this is wonderful altar, but Ancient magic is out of my area of expertise——”

The moment Judas the chief executive of 『White Sacrament』, reached the 『Altar』 the goal, he heard this ear-sore-high-pitched-rapid-talking line. Having a stern facial expression with eyes furrowed as always, Judas turned back to the owner of noisy voice.

“Hello Welcome, I, work as the commander of the army under direct supervision of Cardinal Mercedes, my name is Gregorius, Ah, though I look like this I am a bishop, Nufufu, were both same bishop, please don't restrain yourself when with me, nice to meet you.”

The noisy man without a doubt was clad in a robe of bishop, with height of an average adult male, other than his really narrow eyes, there wasn't particularly any special feature in his appearance.

Gregorius moved his hand forward acting familiarly asking for a handshake while his eyes were abnormally narrow, with face like a devious fox in some fairy tale, revealed a somewhat suspicious smile.

“Gregorius 『The Prophet』 huh.....what business do you have Mr. Bishop”

It was almost like he would continue on ignoring, but Judas without showing any hint of being offended, responded back to the handshake.

“No,No, 『The Prophet』 is such an embarrassing second name for me, well, even though I am naming myself as such though,ahaha!”

The two bishops after exchanging handshakes, stood side by side, and exchanged words.

“I asked, what business do you have here?”

“Well, I’m sorry for that, I’m quite a talker, and the talk gets derailed, many people tell me that, hurry up and let’s get to the main matter.”

“.....”

It seemed like Gregorius was not such a dumb person, who wouldn’t understand the pressure from Judas’s silence.

“There is not any deep meaning, just a normal introduction. I want to get along with ‘everyone’ in Crusaders, and so I am giving my introductions to everyone person here and there, you are quite conspicuous——whoops, I mean that you’re mysterious, I couldn’t find the your home or contact address, so here I am to gave my introduction, please take no offence.”

“Then, you have already completed your goal, right?”

It was obvious he was saying him to return back quickly.

But maybe he did understood it or didn’t, Gregorius intensified his smile, and started talking to him.

“Well well, we have met after all, why don’t exchange information and present condition status?”

Though I look like this I know a lot of things. I have gotten hold of information of various things happening in Daedalus, ah, this seems like praising myself, Yes”

“I don’t have any interest in that, you too won’t be interested in hearing things from an old man who is always secluded in research, right”

Though having a high position of bishop, Judas was still immersed in his research, he is born researcher, within the church, this matter is quite famous.

It was also said, Judas reached till the position of Bishop, for making a experiment laboratory for his research.

In other words, till the time he gets to do his own research without any disturbances, he won't desire anything else, things like 'wealth' or 'authority' desired by other clergymen is of no use to him.

The information gotten from Judas would only be technical status information of his research, one wouldn't get any information for gaining profits from it.

Judas had gotten a lot of good evaluation from foreign and home country, for creating the 7th Apostle Sariel.

However, even if he hid inside his place using his abilities, the position of Bishop itself was troublesome, more than anything the highest ranking person Pope has taken a liking to him, due to that most don't interfere with him and regarded him highly, even within church.

Of course, such fame wouldn't leave Gregorius's ears, but, he still tried to talk to Judas like a person forcibly inviting someone to a brothel.

"I certainly know, you are interfering with 'our' work, however——"

In the frivolous narrow eyes, a slight sharp light was residing.

"——Everyone is currently doing the 'demon hunting', it can stir up an animosity towards you because of your actions, right?"

Judas slowly turned his face towards Gregorius.

The tall Judas looked upon Gregorius as if looking down on him.

The trained and tanned body, like that of a warrior fighting on frontlines was abnormal for a old aged researcher.

But, even under the immense pressure of a drawn out sword Gregorius didn't falter even a bit.

"It will be rude to ask you——why do you think so, right. You had 『Predicted』 my actions, right?"

“Well, in truth that is right, I didn’t have any other leads, so it took time to find you. Just why are you able to move so easily, secretly. Is this the so-called old-man’s wisdom, Nfufufu”

Judas secretly slipped his subordinates as clergymen or soldiers in the occupation squads, for capturing ‘experimental bodies’ for his research and was moving in secret himself too, except Pope nobody else knew about it.

“So, how were the demons of Pandora? Did they satisfy your needs?”

“We have captured enough for starting the first phase, the experiments will start just as planned.”

Judas replied honestly, now knowing there was no need to hide the matter.

“『Holy Soldier Project』 was it? No it really is more excellent than what I had imagined, if you get successful in ‘mass producing’ them, wouldn’t all the soldiers of Crusaders be unemployed from later on?”

To the praise or mockery filled sentence, Judas only replied with “The results are as planned.”

He didn’t pay any attention to the bishop, who was either praising or abusing the research.

“Ah, now that I think about it, there is a squad which was destroyed, I have somewhat information on it? It happened in the occupation squad under my supervision, the name was something like Cyprus Mercenary Group, I think?”

He recalled the face of the only young man, Cyprus, who didn’t return from the mission of demon capturing, but Judas soon erased it into oblivion.

He didn’t have any use for a dead person, if a useful piece’s part was broken, it only needs to be replaced by a new one. Simple as that.

The demons captured by the squad under Cyprus were zero, the experimental subjects which came back alive were only half and the rest were annihilated.

But, taking the failures in account, just like he had said before, the demons for first phase had already been captured.

Hence, he didn’t have any interest in the sarcastic-talking of Gregorius, on the contrary he asked a question.

“Didn’t you too move an apostle. It is not the work of an apostle to kill even less than 1 million demons.”

“Well even I thought that, but I just can’t object the 『Prediction』 . It was good till the time of sending, but when she returned she was really angry and took more amount of money as the reward, my bonus went down the drain, just like that. Hahaha”

While scratching his dull blond hair, Gregorius talked about the tyranny of 11th Apostle Misa in a humorous way.

“They have gained even more ‘DP’ than you, just because you can access the 『Divine Will Record』 , it doesn’t mean you can easily control the Apostles”

“.....Yeah, you’re right. I’ll keep that in mind.”

Judas sensed the the presence of Gregorius getting sharp for an instant. It might be the unrest or vigilance of getting his 『Prediction』 rightly, whatever it maybe, both parties didn’t had any intention of accompanying each other.

“I would like you to not misunderstand, I don’t have any intention of either interfering or opposing you and your work.

Whenever you will try to do something new ‘in our Daedalus’, please just pass it through our ears, it will be convenient for you too.

Though we have different intentions, but it doesn’t change the fact we all are working for god. Having an harmonious collaborative relationship is what I, no, even god might be desiring it.”

“.....I’ll remember it”

saying ‘Thank you’, Gregorius respectfully bowed, but Judas was no more looking at him.

His eyes were staring at the, ancient altar in front of him.

What sort of magic apparatus it was, just like Gregorius said a non-expert in this area wouldn’t ever understand.

But, Judas understood what it was, how to use, what it can do, all in one glance.

Therefore, he without any hesitation, knowing that this was rank 4 dungeon, gave the ‘decisions’.

“Ah, I almost forgot it, Congratulations of the establishment of ‘The Fourth Laboratory’”

This was no more the unnamed new area within Media Ruins.

The disgusting laboratory, creating people like Kurono for Holy Soldier Project, the third laboratory, now had a new extension, in other words

『The Fourth Laboratory』 was established within the Pandora Continent.



Chapter 151 – Nightmare (1)

Body is heavy, head is heavy, the continuously dozing consciousness will never permit to leave this warm space.

But, it won't allow a lazy thought,

"What time it is, do you know!? Hurry and wake up!"

Thanks to Mom, I certainly woke up.

"Hm.....What, time?"

The loud voice of mom, indicated it was 7 AM currently.

".....I see"

"Stop dozing off.....hurry up and get ready or you'll really be late!"

Saying that, mom turned back her glossy raven-black hair, and left the room.

Seeing the well-ordered proportions of her that looked like a model, I stood up unsteadily, while still in a daze.

No, wrong, this wasn't laziness, the body was instinctively desiring rest.

Strange, I didn't pull an all-nighter yesterday, I certainly slept at the right time, and didn't even do exercises that would leave fatigue.

Yes, yesterday was the same as always, a normal day.

"Time for changing clothes....."

My head still rotating slowly, I headed towards the closet by dragging my body, and put on the school uniform that hung on the hanger.

From that point, was the normal daily routine work, even without paying attention to it, the body moved on its own.

Washed my face, brushed the teeth, for eating the breakfast, headed towards the living room, there I exchanged the morning salutations with family.

".....Good Morning"

The words that left my mouth, in the first place my voice was low it became even more low by 1 octave, and turned into a groaning voice of the dead.

But with just that, nothing else changed from normal.

The scene that I had repeated yesterday, day before yesterday and will repeat it tomorrow, day after tomorrow too.

Good Morning“

Father, who was wearing a suit and was reading the newspaper in his hands, raised the face up, and gave me a small greeting.

His figure was like that of a typical father, but due to his small build and child-face, to the extent some may even think, what if he was secretly still a student.

But, because he was my father, it didn't feel that strange to me.

“Good morning. Mao, are you sick?”

The thing that reached my ears which was even more refreshing than the chirp of a songbird, were the morning salutations and words that show caring about me from my sister, Mana.

Mao, I felt it had been a long, to be called by that name.

“No, I don't have a fever or cold.....just, I feel like lazing, not wanting to do anything.”

I spoke spiritless lines lazily.

The sister showed an understanding face, seeing my condition, most probably she would have thought it was because of lack of sleep.

I am mostly chased by the deadline due to that I pulled all-nighters, it wasn't strange for me to show my laziness in front of my family due to lack of sleep.

But, today I was obviously strange.

No matter how much I thought there was no reason for fatigue, but the body was sluggishly moving as if revolting against my words.

This most probably, was not a physical fatigue, but a mental fatigue.

In the first place, there shouldn't been anything through which I would get a mental shock.

Overenthusiastically confessing to Shirasaki-san just for getting rejected, I hadn't suffered from such a melancholic event yet.

Well, I didn't even have strong feelings of love for her that I would confess to her either though.

“Why are dozing off, take this and get going! Yuriko-chan is already here!”

“.....Yuriko-chan?”

While being forced to take the somewhat-less-love-filled bentou from mom, I was told that.

Yuriko-chan, who the hell is that, Ah, wait, isn't it Shirasaki-san's name.

Eh, What, she came here? For whom? me?

Impossible, Shirasaki-san is only a fellow club member, our relationship is only above than friend and lot below than best-friend, lover relationship, not in hell, even my classmates keep on telling me 'Keep the delusion in your works only' with sympathizing eyes.

No, but well, if she had come here in reality, it ain't my delusion.

The reason Shirasaki-san had come, must be because of club activity related, I didn't know exactly, but something like this also happens.

Thinking about it, I thought it wouldn't be good to keep her waiting, stuffed the bentou inside the bag, and left the living room.

"I'm going"

Hearing the words 'Have a safe trip', I head towards the entrance corridor quickly.

But, changing my shoes, the moment I rest my hands on the door of my familiar house, the body stiffened as if it got struck by lightning.

".....I don't want to go"

Suddenly, I thought as such.

This lazy body and sluggish mind, might be a major factor.

But, this time it wasn't a matter of wanting to do or not, my leg refused to move forward, for something more fundamental, like instinctively.

I don't want to go, does that mean School?

No, I don't want to go outside.

The outside, world, spread outside the entrance corridor, was isolated by my house, an another world.

"No, it's not good.....I have to go to school....."

Furthermore, there was a person waiting for me named Shirasaki-san on the other side of the door.

Cutting the gloomy thoughts, I opened the door to outside.

"Ah——"

The scene spread outside the open door, was hell.

The soil was drenched with blood, the ground's surface was drilled by many craters as though they were creating by taking a hella strong shock.

The thunderously blazing flames close up from left and right, upon seeing more clearly, someone crucified on a cross was being burned in the flames.

The things burning, were not only humans, but also many houses and all, anyhow, many-many things were being destroyed and caught fire.

"You cannot run."

The murmur of that small child, pierced deep through my ear.

I moved my vision a little below, she was there.

The one waiting for me, was not flaxen-haired, good-looking Shirasaki Yuriko,

"I won't let you escape"

but it was the Apostle of God, having white skin, white hair and white clothes along with brilliantly shining crimson eyes.

"Sariel....."

7th Apostle, Sariel was standing in front of me, holding a thin spear.

"I won't allow you to escape from this world."

The thin arms of Sariel moved.

With an unbelievable speed the pointed side of the thin spear, struck deep inside my abdomen.

"Gahaa!?"

The blood scattered, feeling the severe pain piercing my body, without having any other choice, I grabbed the spear stuck in my stomach instinctively.

That moment, the spear was pulled out.

The blade didn't completely leave the body, due to which my body also got pulled.

"Guaa.....S-Sto,p....."

While grabbing the spear with slender arms, slowly, but surely, Sariel pulled me to outside, the other world.

I tried to stop with all my strength, but it was nothing more than wasted-effort by the powerless me.

".....Stop it.....Just stop it"

“No, I don’t hate Kurono’s scent”

Even so I couldn't let her become become dirty, so I released her quickly from my hands.

Lily came down from the bed while flapping her wings, and left the room saying the breakfast was ready.

She wasn't able to change her anxious look till the end, and I was the making her look like that.

".....It's alright. I'm fine"

As to persuade myself, I mutter.

I cannot forget it, I can't help but think it, that was why, I had no choice but to accept the reality.

"Time to wash my face."

This place was, a room in the boarding house mainly used by adventurers in Spada.

From the time that fight had ended, a week had already passed.

Chapter 152 – Nightmare (2)

That girl, appeared abruptly.

She had light pink hair, at a glance she was wearing a white garment like a magician, but it is short, exposing the thighs and shoulders, the appearance is radical.

She has well-ordered face, as if she fully understood her own beauty, she wore many decorative ornaments on her.

A showy noble girl, that is the most suitable expression for her appearance.

But,

“11th Apostle Misa, Well, you scum demons won’t understand the meaning of this name——”

She was a monster wearing human skin.

“U, A.....”

Before he knew it, he was lying with face down.

After taking the wave of some attack magic, his body flew easily, and was struck severely on the ground, he understood that much within his mind.

“.....Simon”

Having his name called out by a familiar voice, Simon starts to regain his consciousness.

“Susu-san?”

Upon regaining the consciousness, he understood that he was taken to wreckage of toppled over carriage by Susu.

But, the thing that worried him was, the expression of her which used to be always calm and composed was, distorted with panic, no, pain.

“Um, Are you fi—NGUU!”

The words of worry, were interrupted by her hand.

“Don’t make noise, she will notice us”

In a position of being hugged, hearing the words of Susu near his ears, Simon nodded.

“We can’t win against her——”

Susu while hugging Simon, without making a sound slipped in the gap of the toppled over carriage.

Dark, Narrow. The feeling was of getting stuffed inside a coffin with slightly opened lid.

“We don’t have any other way to live other than to keep on hiding.....”

Her tone was filled with a given up attitude.

“Nh, Nh-!”

Having his mouth blocked, Simon raised the voice of protest.

Outside the sounds of fierce battle, screams of adventurers was resounding.

They were still fighting, against the girl with despair-giving power, not giving up, keeping on resisting till the end of their life.

Nevertheless, hiding by himself, though he was not a brave warrior but a weak alchemist, he still felt the surge to resist.

“Due to negligence, my core got a strong attack.....I’m sorry, I can’t do anything other than to protect you through the camouflage.....”

Hearing that, Simon’s body stiffened.

He knew that her race was a slime from the time of self-introductions, and, he, a rank 1 adventurer too, knew the core was the vital point of slimes.

The core acts as the heart and brain of body, it is the most important organ to a slime, a attack to that means an inevitable death.

“.....”

He couldn’t find any words to speak, no, even if he did and tried to, he wouldn’t be able to speak as long as his mouth was blocked.

But even without words, Susu shows an expression as though she knew what Simon was thinking.

“Don’t worry, I will protect you to the end.....”

Simon felt, his legs getting submerged in water-like thing.

That was because, Susu was covering Simon’s body after changing it into slime form.

He didn’t feel any unpleasant feeling from it.

Because, she was only thinking of protecting Simon, even though her own death was in front of her.

“.....Nh, Nhhh!”

“Fufu, you’re kind, worrying about me……It’s not something you need to worry about, it isn’t a bad way to die while protecting the person you love, right?”

Susu had already changed her body from below the chest into slime, and was already covering to the neck of Simon.

The places still as a human were, the normal looking girl face, and the right hand covering Simon’s mouth.

“Well then, Goodbye, I love you——”

Susu removed her right hand from Simon’s mouth, in turn blocked it with her lips.

No, that was without a doubt the passionate kiss of a lovestruck girl.

“Nh!”

The soft feeling on the lips, didn’t even last for one second.

Finally Susu’s body had turned completely to slime, and was covering Simon from the tip of toe to the top of head with a semi-transparent substance.

“……!”

The person being protected didn’t knew it, but it was the flawless concealment skill.

The epidermis of Slime had tremendous camouflaging power and changes to match its surrounding, without touching it no one would know that something was there.

Then, the sound and smell.

Even if Simon moved a little, no sound would reach outside and will be absorbed, because it covering the whole body, it even concealed the body odor which even a beast man wouldn’t be able to sense.

And, the flawless presence concealment due to the DP of 『Hanzoma』

Susu, the person who can even deceive the sixth sense,

“O-i! Please reply if anyone is alive!”

Really did save, Simon from the threat of Apostle, just like she said.

But, by the time Kurono arrived, Susu’s body had already lost the glitter of life, and reduced to just a red core.

Simon, while hugging her remains feeling depressed, was getting crushed by his powerlessness.

That, didn't change even now, 1 week after the fight——

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(simon POV)

“Nh.....”

It feels like a I saw a dream.

That was memory of 1 week ago, the memory of the useless me, who couldn't do anything, and was just protected.

Even if I keep on thinking about it, I will only be engulfed in the darkness. Intentionally stopping off the thought process, somewhat forcibly tried to move.

“.....Hot”

Today is 13th day of Hatsuhi, finally the summer is coming, the heat in atmosphere has risen a lot from yesterday.

I crawl out of bed dragging my body which is sticky due to unpleasant sweat.

The king-size bed with white sheet spread over it, is already too big for the small me.

It is not only big.

Though there isn't any canopy, but all the materials used for making this simple bed are first-class goods.

It isn't something, I, a rank 1 adventurer should lie down on.

And, the unsuitable social position thing was not only the bed, but this whole room too.

It absurd to even compare it to the normal storerooms of guild, like the laboratory or guest rooms.

The vastness and structure, along with the furniture and equipments, not even one is something normal.

Just like a place where a noble would reside——No, this place, in itself is a room inside the mansion of a genuine noble.

“When will I be able to get out of here?”

I mutter involuntarily.

Any further monologue would only turn into complaints towards my never-stopping elder sister, so I will refrain for now.

“It’s good we got saved, but for it to turn like this.....”

Haa, while sighing, I recalled the reunion with my step sister, a noble of Spada, and the commanding officer of Spada’s Army’s Second Squad 『Tempest』, Emelia Friedrich Baliel.

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Spada’s Army’s Second Squad 『Tempest』 was walking bravely in the night road while making strong sounds of horse’s hoof kicking the ground and their neighing.

“O-I!”

Shouting with a loud, while waving hands, was Simon.

Kurono, Fiona, Lily, were standing 1 step behind Simon quietly.

They had the ulterior motives to not get involved in some strange things by letting Simon talk with them, after all the commanding officer of the approaching army was his sister.

And, that bore fruit.

Without being vigilant, nor suddenly attacking, the armored warrior army, stopped in front of Simon.

“Simon? Is it really you!?”

Under the night sky, the voice of a dignified woman resounded.

“Yeah, Lia-nee”

Hearing Simon’s answer, an armor knight in dark grey armor, no, most probably a general flew down from a king-size unicorn.

She gives the Halberd and Tower Shield to the warrior besides her as though she were forcing, and ran towards Simon with both hands spread. The appearance of a full armored girl approaching, was just like having an intimidating atmosphere of a steel wall approaching.

Simon almost ran away, but he couldn't pull back in the situation, and accepted the rush of his sister, the giant armor and helmet.

At that moment, Kurono recalled the video of a dummy colliding head-on with a 10 ton truck, in the traffic safety class of elementary school.

"Simon! You big fool, because you got deceived by the old hag that you had to——"

Simon while being strangled between two sturdy gauntlets, no, while being hugged, suddenly started to get lecture from her sister.

The almost-going-to-sleep Simon, woke up around the latter part of her words.

"Umm, Lia-nee, right now I want you to help——"

He requested for rescue, the original aim.

Kurono stood behind without saying anything, and started to observe Simon's sister.

(Awesome, this is the first time I can see a girl taller than mom, or rather, isn't she taller than me too?)

The results from the diagnosis were true, though she was wearing armored helmet, but her height was crossing 190cm.

The scene of Simon, 150cm + somewhat, was more like that of parent and child embracing.

However having a tall stature, the face peeking out of the helmet was not that of stern man or gorilla, but a well-ordered beautiful elf-like face.

Her dark honey-colored blonde hair was different from Simon's ashen-colored hair, but her eyes were the same emerald green, her eyes and hair were of a typical Elf.

Her slit eyes were beautiful, but they could give the impression of coldness more.

As for Kurono, aside from that, he was more concerned about her not lowering her guard down even while hugging Simon.

Kurono had a hunch that she had higher ability than himself.

(If she would be hostile, no doubt we will die here.)

With Simon here it should be fine, but even while thinking that, cold sweat streamed down his cheeks.

After the state of tension, the talk between Simon and her sister was,
“——We know somewhat about the situation. His Majesty Leonhart wishes for accepting all the refugees from Daedalus.”

On those words, Kurono and Simon breathed a sigh of relief.

Even Kurono knew about the name Leonhart, the king of Spada with a second name as 『Sword King』 .

Though being the people of Daedalus, an enemy nation, but still generously taking them in, for that Kurono gave him gratitude within his heart.

However,

“It seems like we moved a little late, the people who seemed to be refugees, all have died within the mountains of Galahad. Here too is quite brutal scene, just what happened?”

Not only Adventurers, but also the refugees met the fate of death, that fact Kurono was about to know while travelling through the Galahad mountain range.

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(simon POV)

After wearing the morning outfit, I left the bedroom for getting breakfast,

“Ah, Good Morning.....”

“Good Morning, so you were awake. I was thinking of beating you to wake you up if you were still sleeping.”

And met with the person who speaks the most fearful things in morning, Lia-nee.

She really wakes up others by ‘beating’ which I can’t deal with, what’s more it’s not a slap but punches.

Many others say her face to be beautiful, but to me it looks like a face of man-eating dragon.

Right now on her face, there were drops of sweat.

Her blonde straight hair also seem somewhat wet.

From her body wearing a thin shirt and simple leggings, steam is rising up, as though it is something like an aura, most probably she was doing martial skill training from early morning.

It's good that I was not forced to accompany her.

She is the sister who has been bullying me with the punishment called training, while knowing my weak body constitution.

The most of the reason as why I am doing work as an adventurer after running out from this Baniel house, is to run from this dreadful sister.

Really dreadful, worst case psycho, overbearing, sister who doesn't treat others as people, a person who can't act as a good person like Onii-san——
“Hm, are you thinking something rude, Simon?”

Her line of sights attacks me as though it will release laser beams.

“Eh, No, nothing”

“You're nervousness easily appears on your face, really, you get flustered easily, still you call yourself a man.”

While abusing, she grabs my both shoulders and forcefully pulls me.

Due to the difference of more than 40 cm in height, Lia-nee bends forward, and brings her face really near that I can feel her breathing.

T-This is the stance of threat, maybe because I was safe for 3 months, that my senses got dull and I got caught.

The glint of light in the sharp green eyes, seems like it is peering through my eyes.

Along with that, two mountains of ultra weight lean on my small chest, she is leaning her oversized breasts like it is natural.

I feel unpleasant for myself getting embarrassed even if for one second.

“Simon, if you're not within the home then you're no good, come back.”

And due to the words of rejection, the disgust within my corner of heart bursts out.

“I did not run away from home because of some child play.....I'm already an adult, and can live alo——”

“You are weak. You cannot gain success from being an adventurer. It would be good if any ordinary person lives its life being a low rank adventurer, but

though you're adopted you still are a person of Baniel Family, that's why you have to live a life corresponding to the family status."

The complaint of Lia-nee, I would have obediently accepted if I was the eldest son.

However, the successor to Baniel, in other words my step brother are present, and there are 3 of them.

"Stepfather also consented to it, Lia-nee, you don't have any obligation to speak this and that."

"Father is really kind towards you, Why don't you understand that he is letting you do your selfishness?"

"That is——"

"Stop the worthless research of something like alchemy, return back to home. It's not too late right now, I will give you the right 'job' which doesn't insult Baniel's family, listen, I am thinking about you, do you understand"

"Lia-nee is only worried about the status of family, not about me....."

I won't say her to understand, just leave me alone.

It's just that much, but this person interferes at each and every opportunity. Really, Lia-nee's mansion is not a good idea, even the parent's home is more better than this.

"You can't even use magic or martial skills, as an adventurer you are useless. Even after experiencing 'war' one time, you still don't understand that much?"

These were not the complaints like before which I could refuse, this is fatal.

"You going speak excuses like alchemy is not fighting? Even so, it doesn't change the fact that you were protected till the end and are still living disgracefully."

"S, Stop it....."

"Know your position, you're not strong enough to protect someone, you can never become strong."

"Shut up!"

I try to shake the hands restraining me, but due to my powerlessness they didn't even budge a bit.

That in turn acts as a symbol for my weakness, it is extremely shameful.

“Hmph, Whatever”

She pushed me and released me from her hand restraint.

Due to the push, I stumbled some steps, and fell on my backside, even more shameful.

“I will do this talk later.”

After showing me eyes full of disgust, she turned her back towards me.

“That’s right, the survivors of the refugees you were worrying about, their treatment has been decided.”

“Eh, Really!? What will happen to them, no, where are they!?”

I know the fact, the ‘girl monster’ who attacked us, had already killed all the refugees before the start of fight in Alsace.

Though there was tragic state inside Galahad Mountain Range, but there were some who were saved miraculously like me.

The survivors are only 50, at first there were more than 10,000, the survival rate was really low, just a mere, 0.5%

Even so it doesn’t change the fact that they are survivors, I am greatly concerned of their treatment within Spada.

This is an information that Onii-san, a normal adventurer, won’t know anytime soon, and so I will have to tell him.

“Don’t be impatient, I’ll tell during breakfast.”

Saying that, Lia-nee left as though she lost interest to talk with me anymore.

Chapter 153 – Shadow of Peace (1)

13th of Month of Hatsuhi, it has been a week since the encounter with those annoying apostles.

We were given entry to inside Spada, right now we are spending our peaceful holidays within an inn for adventurers.

It took 3 days to cross Galahad Mountain Range to reach Spada, after arriving it took many days to give the information about the Daedalus and Alsace defensive battle, it is only from today that we can relax without doing anything.

The report went through the guild, without any problems it was completed. I had thought of things like torture interrogation, but it ended up as needles anxiety. I also want to refrain myself from using my divine protection with full power within Spada.

When saying the guild, our fight was performed in the form of an emergency quest.

The adventurer survivors are only 4, the refugees needed to be protected are almost near extinct with the dreadful death rate, the quest ended up as a failure, big failure.

But, maybe because they took the circumstances into consideration, we were paid a little reward money.

It's not like we fought for money, but thinking about Kurono's hardships, upon getting the really low reward money, I was about to get help from the fairy Queen.

Anyhow, like this the aftermath of battle got over.

We didn't get anything, but I got to Spada with Kurono like I had thought, it is good.

However, it was outside my expectations that, that shrewd alchemist survived.

It would have been better if he died, but got saved.....really, the passion of woman is a terrifying thing, because though being a person with rank 4 abilities, she was able to save him through the attack of an Apostle.

I am the person who knows the best of her, Susu's feelings, so I don't have any intention to complain her for doing useless things, I just can't say anything.

I am half fairy, and I pay respect and admire a lovestruck maiden with pure heart, it really is nice.

However, it is another story if Simon gets saved and I need to feel unpleasant feelings.

That weak stick like man, was the one who made me feel jealousy, though I can ignore the bad feelings, but I can't see him as a nice person.

No, I'll put aside my complaints for now, that isn't the problem that is worrying me now.

The most important pending issue is, the feelings of Kurono.

No matter of how many of refugees are sacrificed, I don't give a shit, looking at the scores of other's playing board game is more interesting than their dying numbers.

As for adventurers who fought with us, I will give them good evaluation, and I thought some were nice, but upon their death it's not to the extent I would cry and be depressed, at most I only regret at the loss of excellent pawns.

But, it won't go that way for kind-hearted Kurono, he can't find a practical answer like the loss of pawns.

I know it from the time at Village of Irz, Kurono laments, mourns for, and worries about the loss of any person, even if it wasn't because of him.

The second defeat, the fight this time, has given the damage which cannot be compared to the one of Village of Irz, Kurono has taken a severe shock due to it.

At this rate it will be bad, this time Kurono's heart is near destruction, I have to somehow cheer him up.

Fortunately, there is time.

It's good to comfort and heal Kurono's injured heart, slowly, not anyone else, but me.

".....Fufufu"

"Oh, Lily-san, are you making an evil plot?"

Hearing the voice of Fiona, sitting on a seat around the circular table, I am brought back to reality from the ocean of thoughts.

“Don’t speak disgraceful things”

“I’m sorry, no matter how I looked, it was an evil smile, so unintentionally.”
I completely think that this woman doesn’t know to coat the words coming out of mouth.

But, if I get irritated at everything then I can’t accompany this airheaded witch, the idiotic rude remarks, I have already gotten used to them.

“Kurono-san is still not coming”

It would be better to say that you can’t wait anymore, she shows integrity at strange time.

To wait in front of a table with breakfast prepared, is like a torture to this glutton witch.

But even so she is bearing without complaining, maybe she is putting effort though being clumsy.

“Kurono is tired, wait quietly. Compared to Kurono you have quite a calm and composed face, I thought a normal human would be somewhat depressed.”

A little nasty question.

Fiona hasn’t taken any type of shock from this massive sacrifice just like me. I’m curious about that thing a little.

Just what is this woman hiding inside her heart?

“Won’t Lily-san understand my heart with your telepathy.”

“You’ve got quite a nerve to say something like that after casting ‘protect’ on it”

Fiona’s true feelings, the innermost parts of her heart are being protected by a strong mind protect that my telepathy cannot break through.

I can only read her true feelings that she doesn’t want to hide, the outer surface only. I cannot reach to the feelings she wants keep as secret.

“It’s only natural for creating a wall around heart. for a witch”

“That’s why I’m asking like this, so, what is it?”

“Even if you ask what is it.....”

At first she looks constantly expressionless, but I felt hesitation rising up on the surface of her heart.

“.....I too have taken a shock, but, having a person who has taken even greater shock in front of me, it helps me to calm down.”

“I see, that might be right”

For a normal person, it is answer to consent on.

It is just like the situation when someone is about to get angry, but seeing his/her friend get angry, the anger subsides.

But, if it really was that reason,

“That’s why, I’m worried about Kurono-san’

Then you won’t have that expressionless face, Fiona?

“That’s right, I too am worried, I need to cheer him up”

Now that I can’t read her true feelings, this is nothing more than a guess, but Fiona didn’t get any shock from the current situation at all.

If you say it’s like mine, then no it’s not, She has taken shock to the fact that ‘She didn’t get any shock’.

For a normal and decent person, it’s natural to grieve and moan like Kurono, but it didn’t go like that for her herself, even if the refugees died, the comrades who fought with us died, her heart didn’t waver.

Geez, having an half-assed moral is really a trouble, just why do people hesitate to sacrifice others for protecting your important person or thing. Their feelings, are only natural that I can understand, but I won’t ever agree to them for eternity.

“Ah, Kurono-san came”

Fiona speaks in a somewhat happy voice, is she that happy to be able to eat food, no, why wouldn’t be this glutton happy to be able to eat good.

“Good Morning Kurono-san”

“Yeah, Good Morning, Sorry, for making you wait——”

Kurono came after exchanging salutations with Fiona, he doesn’t look any different from always.

But, the things he had lost in the fight have greatly changed the outward appearance of his.

He has lost his trademark as a black magician 『Baphomet's Embrace』 , and now is only wearing a clean shirt and worn-out black-dyed leather pants, it's a casual attire for a normal person.

If Kurono's body was not filled with toned muscles and not having a iron plate card hanging from his neck, one wouldn't know he is a adventurer.

But, the thing that firstly attracts attention is the eyepatch covering his left eye.

Due to the last attack of 8th Apostle Ai, Kurono lost his left eye, right now the thing inside his eye socket is the hardened black magic 『Body Supplementation』 as a substitute. A temporary fake eye, of course there is no eyesight in that.

Though there is high-grade healing magic to restore something that is lost, but Kurono didn't seem like he cared much about it, and didn't even ask for it.

Though the bandage which was painful to look at has been removed, but looking at Kurono wearing the white eyepatch for medical use, it looks like he is hurt and in pain, and my heart feels like it is about to break.

I'm sorry, I cannot heal it, the fairy drug cannot restore the eyeball.....I'm regretting at my inadequacy.

"What happened Lily, are you sick?"

"No, not at all, I'm completely fine"

To Kurono's worrying kind words, I reply with a cute smile.

Yeah, I'm fine, the one who is not fine, is Kurono.

How can you keep that calm face? I know Kurono's deep anguish.

But still, during these normal days, you worry about me, smile, and be kind.

You don't have to do that much, It's alright, to be cooped up in the room, and cried the whole day, you can even rely on me too.

I will take care of you, I will keep on taking care of you.

That's why stop pretending to be fine for not making me worried about you——but, you trying so hard for me, those feelings are unbearably pleasant, I can't go against the pleasure of them tormenting my heart splendidly. [ET: S&M in one.?)

It's bad, the person who needs to cheer up, is you and it's my responsibility, but if you keep on doing that I will only be pampered.
I can't be drowned in Kurono's kindness, I have to be helpful to him, after all I'm his fellow partner, for now only.

Chapter 154 – Shadow of Peace (2)

Kurono, Lily and Fiona are taking a somewhat late breakfast in 『Tail of Cat』 inn, the place they are lodging.

This unique inn organised with all war cats, is suitable for lower-middle or low rank adventurers, there are many adventurers who are drifting from the intense outside quests use this place, a perfect inn for Kurono and others.

It isn't splendidly tasty, but while eating a good amount of food, the three talk about the plans of today.

「What shall we do today? Should we go to Guild and look at some quests?」

His outward appearance is calm and composed which he is pretending, while thinking the ideal work of an adventurer, Kurono gives out such a proposal.

「You don't need to overstrain yourself Kurono, it's good if you rest a little more」

While being in the child appearance, having brought back her adult consciousness back, Lily speaks words of worry to Kurono.

「No, I'm fine, and we don't have any surplus money too」

The reward for the emergency quest, was 10 gold per person, more briefly it was paid in the money unit of Spada that is 100,000 klan. [ET/TN: klan is the currency unit]

In Daedalus the silver or gold was used just as it was, but in the city-state in the central part of Pandora Continent including Spada all used the currency unit called 『klan』 .

1 klan = 1 Silver is an normal and easy to understand currency value, even an not-good-with-mind adventurer can understand it.

「With 300,000 klan, won't be able to live normally for some time?」 (Fiona)

This inn takes 3000 klan for 1 night, simple calculation they can stay for 100 days here.

Along with the food, drinks and other expenses, they can live for a little over 1 month, even Kurono quickly understood it.

「That's right, if we can reduce your food expenses then we can 'live for more long' with this much money.」

「Are you trying to tell me to die, Lily-san?」

In front of Fiona the plates placed are twice the amount Kurono and Lily ate. It felt like it had been a long time seeing Fiona's real ability.

「We can't just spend it all on living expenses, We are adventurers, now that we have already spent a lot, why don't we go to shopping today to buy new equipments.」

Ignoring Fiona, who is increasing food expenses with her additional food orders, Lily gives out such a proposal.

「Shopping, eh, certainly we should.....」

Surely, Kurono lost too many things in the previous two fights.

Starting from his favorite black robe 『Baphomet's Embrace』, the rare baton made for black magical power 『Black Ballista Replica』, the swords used in Sword Arts, all and every sort of potions, et cetera.

In the end, the only things left with him are 『Cured Grudge Hatchet 「HaraRetsu」』 with a big hole in it from the attack of arrow and the 『Mithril Sword』 stolen from Cyprus.

Mostly all of the equipments needed in fights, either have exhausted completely, or broken.

「We need to many things, if we couldn't manage it then 300,000 will just leave our hands quickly.」

Towards the two with no damage to equipments, Kurono ends up feelings guilty.

「It's not much of problem, something like 300,000 we can earn it easily.」
It's only 'small change', Lily refrained herself from saying it.

「You're right, we have to work hard and earn money.」

Kurono, felt a need to hurry, in this situation with nothing to do.

Along with Spada's Military force, and the impregnable stronghold set up near the Galahad Mountain Range, so even if Crusaders were to come Spada has the strength to stop their advance, Kurono and other's heard all this

information some days ago during the time of explanation in Spada's Adventurer Guild.

However, due to the precedents of Daedalus Army, no matter how much 'It will be fine' is said, the uneasiness just won't rub off.

Just what could he could do as a mere adventurer, even Kurono understands the limits from his position.

A rank 1 and an outsider adventurer at that, the words of him will be taken as nonsense and he won't be able to get the attention to Spada Army, it's obvious even before doing it.

He can't do anything but pray that Spada Army's upper echelons are now more vigilant towards Crusaders, after the report of Emergency quest and information of Daedalus's fall.

Because he knows that, Kurono doesn't say anything, Lily too thinks that the matter is out of their hands now, and she is talking as if she has forgotten about it.

But even so, Kurono can't forget about Crusaders, and couldn't help but worry about it.

The only realistic thing he can do, is once again fight as an adventurer in war when Crusaders come attacking at Spada.

Thinking that, he needs to prepare for the fight against Crusaders, no, more precisely, Kurono thinks he needs to complete his duty to get 'Strong' so as to not lament over his powerlessness.

「Well then, let's do shopping today, I also want to get familiar with this city」

Still, Kurono couldn't help but lament, regret and say NO to the activities he needs to do for becoming strong, at least for now.

Humans are not that simple after all.

Right now, just like Lily is thinking, Kurono needed rest.

「Ufufu, it's the first time I have come to a big city, I can't wait much.」

Lily sends a good and pure looking smile to Kurono

「Yeah, Spada surely is big——」

「Excuse me, Customer」

At that moment a voice calls out from behind Kurono.

They weren't too noisy were they? While thinking that he turns back, there stood a short werecat in apron, let it be the appearance or statement, without a doubt it is a staff of this inn.

「You are Kurono-sama, right?」

「Yes」

「A letter has been sent for you, here you go.」

While saying words of gratitude, just who would have given the letter, feeling that question in mind he looks at the front, and get the answer.

「From Simon, huh」

From the moment they reached Spada, Simon went his own way and they to their own.

He was taken by his elder sister the commanding officer of the help squad, and maybe because he was busy they couldn't meet after that.

He had doubts how he could pinpoint his location, but then, if he is related to someone with great reputation in Spada like his sister, it's an easy task to know the whereabouts of an adventurer or so Kurono guessed.

「So, What about Simon?」

「Hm, Yeah, Err.....」

Upon getting urged to hurry from Lily, Kurono looked at the letter.

After reading the whole letter, Kurono conveyed the contents in a serious expression.

「The location of the survivors from refugees is written.」

I see, Lily replies that small word, and guesses the shopping today is now cancelled.

Chapter 155 – Rejection (1)

Spada is structured with the royal castle in centre, and the castle town spreading in concentric circles.

It is the same as the capital city of Daedalus, no, as a matter of fact Daedalus was made taking Spada as a reference.

Daedalus was protected by the outer walls, and inner walls covering the royal castle, but Spada has crossed that and there are triple layers of protection.

The third protective wall, in other words the first outer wall, just inside it is the lower class district, the common people live here, the inn Kurono and others are living is also located here.

Next the second outer wall, is separated from the inner wall, it is the upper class district, the wealthy merchants or nobles live here, the adventurer guild of Spada is also located here, but is only available to rank 4 adventurers and above. It is completely unrelated place for Kurono and others right now.

And the most inner part is the third protective wall, it is the outer wall which protects the royalty of Spada, centre of the country, the royal castle. It is the most important area where an outsider like Kurono will be punished the moment he steps there. The most probable way for a normal person to stand here would be to join the Spada Army.

Having no intention to change the job from adventurer, Kurono and others can only use the area between 3rd protective wall and 2nd protective wall, the lower class district.

And, the place he is headed towards the place where refugees were living, was also naturally in this area.

「This place seems like slums」

Fiona gives out her as usual extremely frank impressions.

「Don't say that much, people will can hear it.」

Though Kurono acted slightly modest, but deep in heart he too had the same thoughts.

But it couldn't be helped, even without any discrimination intentions, it is very difficult to say this place, with filthy and dirty houses made of broken stone and wood, is a very good living environment.

The images of slum quarters of Rio de Janeiro, Kurono saw in Television long before, frequently pass through his mind.

Beyond the dark alleys, it wouldn't be strange if some man with good body build is doing the illegal transactions of drugs, this atmosphere was drifting all over the place.

「But, they weren't driven off to the extreme slum areas, Spada does give some generous treatment to them」

Though Lily thought it to be already nauseating here already, but her words were not a lie, because outside the third protective wall, is the most lowest area in much more bad state.

「Yeah, you're right」

Kurono too shows agreement.

Because he is also engaging in occupation like adventurer with life at risk, that he is living in simple yet clean inn.

They were all farmers till now, having lost their lands, how will they live in this Spada, maybe they will unwillingly become adventurers, Kurono guessed as such.

However, he discards the idea of looking after them, after all it is only a sort of arrogance.

「Hey Kurono, after meeting them, what will you say?」

While walking through the somewhat complicated maze-like alleys, Lily asked.

「I.....」

There are survivors of refugees though very few, the time he heard this news, he was extremely delighted.

But, at the time of meeting them, there wouldn't be a chance both him and others will be pleased at each other's good health.

The 50 survivors who survived with only the survival rate being 0.5% he couldn't find the right words to say to them.

「.....Don't know」

Will it be good to say, it's good that you're alive?
Or to repent, saying that he couldn't save anyone?
Or would he worry, how they will live from now on?

「Though I don't know, but if they are alive, I need to talk to them.」

He can't find the words, but his feelings are without a doubt true.

That's why, the moment he got the news about them from the letter from Simon, he without hesitation came walking till here to meet them.

Lily already had a bad premonition, but she couldn't find the right words to stop Kurono.

.
. .

Around the three-story apartment like stone building, bungalows of wood are lined.

Not any different from the deserted place from before, this one corner was, given to the refugees to live here temporarily.

The small childs, have been given to orphanage or temples of Spada, but other than them most of people are still living here.

In front of apartment, there were groups of people talking about of something.

Middle-aged men, small werecats, goblins wearing bandages on arms, lizardmen having many scales broken, there are various people of various races there.

Kurono finds some faces he has seen, and is convinced the refugees from Daedalus are really here.

However, Kurono couldn't find any words for them, they looked depressed and had no life in eyes.

The moment he resolved to call out to them, at that moment.

「Oi, bastard!」

To the sudden voice, he turns back quickly, there stood a young man.

「bastard, you're Kurono, the adventurer one! Why are you alive! How dare you show your face in front of us, huh!!」

The face of screaming man, Kurono remembered it.

「You are, Nachim」

This man was the child of chief of Kwar Village, and the leader of vigilante corps.

At the time of meeting in village, he abused Kuro no and rejected his proposal to run to Spada. Kuro no has some past with him, so he remembered him clearly.

Even 1 month hasn't passed, but his good physique body is now ragged out. With just that much, it's simple to imagine what sort of situation he met with.

「Bastard! Just because you said to run to Spada, that it ended up like this!!」

「S-Stop, that——」

To the sudden false accusation, he tried to reply back, but Nachim didn't pay heed to it.

「How dare you deceive us! I didn't knew we would be hunted by t-tha-that dreadful monster!」

「I didn't had any intention to deceive, if we didn't run then all would have died.」

The 'monster' he is saying, is most probably the apostle.

Even if he said, that he didn't knew that that monster would hunt them, but Kuro no himself didn't knew that an Apostle was waiting for them.

To the escape to Spada, Kuro no has no doubt it was the best option available.

However, the results which are near the extent of complete extinction, are without a doubt the reality.

「Shut up! It's all your fault! It's all your fault, you jinx, angel of death! Fuck, what happened to adventurer, fucking you yourself are only alive! Shit! Fu, Hihhi, I see, I understand, Bastard, you let every other adventurer die as sacrifices so that you can run away yourself! Isn't that right! That's why a scumbag sleaze life adventurer like you are alive!!」

「That's wrong! I didn't leave anyo——」

Kuro no's words don't reach, they can't.

Nachim couldn't control his anger with just screaming, and took out his sword hanging on his waist.

He was more or less the head of vigilante corps, the posture while holding sword is also somewhat refined.

But, his anger and bloodlust increased, due to it the point of sword started trembling.

「Oi, Wait, Calm down——」

「Shut up! It's all your fault many died.....father too, my subordinates too, everyone, everyone died because of you!!」

Nachim talks big as if he would cut at any moment.

But, even before the sword is swung downward, Kurono took an 'attack' on his body.

「!？」

That was, a small stone.

It hit Kurono's collar and returns to being a road-side-lying pebble.

With a dumbfounded expression, Kurono looked at the person who threw the stone at him.

「It's your fault」

It was a young boy.

His age has passed 10, his skin is tanned due to sun, maybe from helping parent's field work.

Even in Irz, in Alsace too, it was a boy who can found at any farm village.

However, the boy is right now making an expression filled with hatred, that a young boy would never make.

「I,」

One more stone came flying.

This time it wasn't the boy, but the mother of yet small girl.

「It's due to you, all because of you——」

Before he knew it, many people made a crowd in front of him.

「It's all your damn fucking fault!」

「You dare deceive us!」

「Return my child!」

「Die! Die and apologize!」

And many stones, rapidly are thrown on Kurono, filled with malice and hostility.

「Ku.....S-Stop it.....」

On Kurono's enhanced tough body, stones thrown by people, won't even make it near the damage point.

But, the malice in each stone, scooped out Kurono's heart.

The 'worst' attack, which couldn't be blocked by any defensive magic.

「S-Stop, It.....」

The responsibility for this large sacrifice all lies in only Kurono, looking objectively at it, it just can't be.

The person who was wrong is, the 11th Apostle Misa, there isn't any other person more worst than her.

But, that thing matters no more to them, it won't be a reason from them to stop throwing stones.

The blasphemous comments of Nachim, are now the only reality to them.

It only that, Kurono got chosen as the scapegoat to run away from the responsibility of this unbearable sorrow.

However, even if he knew it, Kurono right now, neither could say anything back to them, nor could block the stones thrown at him.

Hence, the person to stop it,

「Stop it——」

was only Lily, no one else.

「——or I'll kill you」

At that moment, a sphere of white light pass through Kurono's vision.

The flood, of light and explosion sound gulps down the surroundings.

「Wha, OI!? Lily!？」

「It's alright, I've not hurt anyone」

The worst scenery went through Kurono's head, but Lily standing in front of him, denies it with a cold voice.

It's only the warning shot, in other words, a flash grenade sort of thing.

The moment light and sounds reduce and silence returns, in front of Nachim wielding his sword, stood Lily in her young girl, true form.

「L-Lily-san.....?」

It's the first time Nachim saw the true appearance of Lily, but he still understood her identity.

Having an overwhelming beauty in front of him, the anger in Nachim's heart is overwritten by the Charm's ability.

「Don't do anymore than this, We too, will never come in front of you people again」

「H-However.....」

「Please?」

To Nachim, the words of Lily smiling coldly, felt like the words of God.

「I-It can't be helped! Stop, Stop everyone!」

Nachim turned back, and to the group who were throwing the stones, he threw the words to stop.

Maybe he still had the charisma of vigilante corp leader, or he was afraid of Lily's threat, the stones or abuse both didn't come again at Kurono.

And, he dispersed everyone, the people dispersed here and there while speaking words of complaints to Kurono.

Now, only Kurono, Lily and Fiona, who stood completely unrelated from start till end, were left there.

Lily, took the hand of dumbfounded and petrified Kurono, and smiled warmly at him.

「Let's go back, Kurono?」

「Yeah, you saved me Lily, Thank you」

Showing much more brighter smile, Lily tried to speak the words of gratitude, but the next moment her expression froze.

「But, sorry, can you leave me alone for now.....」

Having said that, Kurono quickly shook off Lily's hand.

Chapter 156 – Rejection (2)

「But, sorry, can you leave me alone for now.....」

Lily looked at her shaken off hand and Kurono's face with a vacant expression alternatively.

「Eh, Ah.....But.....」

On Kurono's unexpected words and actions, Lily revealed a clumsy smile on her frozen expression and replies.

「I'm sorry, you might be worrying, but I, no matter what, want to be alone for some time」

Kurono too, showed a strained smile, and replied back to Lily.

「T-that.....」

「Please, can you listen to my selfish request?」

That was, a precise rejection.

At that moment, Lily had the feelings of rejection thrust from Kurono at her for first time.

Lily being a fairy having telepathic power, she is able to sense the feelings and consciousness that appear on the surface, Kurono was not an exception. Till now Kurono, didn't even had any stress towards Lily living with him let alone having evil feelings towards her.

And that thing, Lily who can read the feelings understood it the best.

But, right at this moment, Kurono thought to keep a distance between the two, she thought that.

That was neither because of uncomfortability, or he disliked Lily's attitude.

It was because if Lily stayed with him, she would see his appearance that he wants to hide.

I don't want to show my pitiable appearance to Lily, that was without a doubt, the pride of Kurono as a man, that he has been keeping from the time he met her in the Forest of Fairies.

Hence, right now, when he has taken a shock he can't bear, he wanted to disappear from before Lily for some time.

「I'm sorry.....」

If she was in her calm state, she would have understood Kurono's feelings, no, even without telepathy, she could have guessed it from his words, attitude and actions.

But however, the thing that appeared on Kurono's outer surface, the feelings to 「Run away from Lily」, assaulted Lily's heart with the most strongest attack she has felt in her whole 32 years long life.

Having been rejected by Kurono for the first time, was more than enough for her to lose her calm.

Destroying the Fountain of Light, letting everyone die, all those things were not able to create ripples in the heart of peerlessly cruel, cold-hearted Lily, but at this moment, her heart was shivering severely.

Just like, the heart of a pure lovestruck maiden who got refused on her confession towards her unrequited love person.

「No, I'm sorry, for giving you needless worry, but, I will be fine even if you leave me for now」

「No.....It's alright, I'm sorry for stopping you」

Lily, wanted to praise herself for replying without going crazy.

But her tone of voice was certainly wavering.

And that Lily's change, couldn't be notice be Kurono who is now not caring about anyone else.

On the surface, Kurono is left alone, and Lily accepted those words, just that much.

「Fiona, I'm sorry, but can you too go back home first along with Lily?」

He speaks to Fiona who was standing besides him as though she was shadow in dark with no presence.

「Understood」

Of course, if Lily couldn't stop Kurono, it's impossible for Fiona to do it then, though she too was worried about for Kurono.

「I will be back by dinner time, sorry, the shopping can be done at a later date」

「No, don't worry about it」

Saying the words of apology along with a wry smile, Kurono starts walking towards the different way from the road, he moved towards a dark alley.

The figure of Kurono going away, Lily watched it with her eyes opened wide while shivering her body little by little.

Still, Lily couldn't speak the words to stop him from going away.

「Lily-san, let's go back」

While seeing the wings of Lily which have lost their light, Fiona asked her with worry mixed in her voice.

But as though she didn't hear her voice, Lily just stood there staring at the alley Kurono disappeared into.

「Lily-sa——!？」

She moved to the front of Lily, the moment she saw Lily's face, Fiona sucked in cold breath on the unexpected scene.

「Hi.....Gusu.....」

From the beautiful emerald eyes, transparent shining jewel-like large drops of tears were falling.

「Uu, Gusu.....K, Kurono.....」

She shook her slender shoulders, and while covering her face with white slim hands,

「Kurono got angry at me.....U, Uwaaaaaaaaa!」

Lily cried for the first time in life.

Having refused by her favorite person, being afraid of getting hated, she cried while raising voice.

As though the sorrow of her heart is seeping out, the tears continue falling without any end.

「Lily-san, even if you cry, I don't know what to do」

The most-unsociable person like Fiona, wouldn't even know the right way to console a crying person.

But, she did feel it won't be good if this crying-young girl fairy is seen by people.

「For the time being, cover the face with this」

And then Fiona, removed the trademark of witches, three-cornered hat from her head and put in on Lily's head.

The witch with pale light blue hair exposed, stood besides the fairy till she stopped crying.

Chapter 157 - Rejection (3)

Without any aim, I kept on wandering around.

I kept on walking through this dark, narrow alley. It was if this was a maze.

I think I said something like 'I'll be back by dinner' but I don't know whether I'll be able to go back from her, no, in the first place, do I even feel like going back?

By the time the sun sets, will I be able to shake of these feelings inside me and tell Lily and Fiona that I'm fine with a smile?

Impossible. I don't have the will power to put up a false bravado or a bluff at all.

"My fault, is it?"

No, that wasn't my fault.

If we hadn't run towards Spada, everyone really would have died.

I, we fought desperately, to let everyone run away.

We didn't know how many of them were there, but those damned Crusaders just kept on coming no matter how many we killed. Against them, our power was limited.

We did buy time, it was barely but we did buy just enough time to run away.

But, in the end, it was all too late, it was useless. While we were fighting, everyone had already died by the hands of the Apostle called Misa.

That's right, the one who should be hated is that Apostle playing around that ruined everything. It isn't my responsibility.

After all I fought so hard.

"As if I could say that....."

Annihilated, that's the result. That's all that matters, that's the reality.

Responsibility, excuses, they don't matter anymore.

It's all my fault, that's right, I couldn't protect any of them.

In front of the graves of my friends in Irz village, I swore, I swore that I won't let anyone else die any more. But even then, haha, how ridiculous, look at the number of casualties I have created.

"I couldn't.....protect anybody."

My heart sank, deeper and deeper, in regret, guilt and helplessness.

I guess, someone like me, a mere high schooler like me, was stupid to think that I could save so many people.

Due to the body modifications and experiments, just because I was given a slightly more power than humans, I ended up deluding myself that I could protect people.

I couldn't save Irz village. Even though I had failed once, I still didn't learn. I really am an idiot.

I should have known my own place better.

Yes, from the time I met Sariel on the castle walls of Daedalus, I had made the wrong choices.

Thinking that I could save everyone if I put my life on the line, I chose to stupidly fight.

I really am an incurable idiot. Was I trying to become a hero? I'm not someone great enough who could save people.

I'm just one single human who can't even protect himself properly.

That time, I should have simply agreed to Sariel's words when she said that she wouldn't chase me even if I run away, and should have simply taken Lily away with me.

That was the correct answer. That would have been the best answer. Everyone else can very well be damned!

That's right, just as Cyprus had said, I will remain as No.49 forever. I should know my own limits of what I can actually protect.

I should stop thinking of protecting everyone.

I should stop thinking that I can save people.

“I don’t have what it takes to save someone……”

Yes, just think only of yourself and those extremely precious to you.

Don’t take too many responsibilities. Don’t uselessly butt your head into things.

Because, no matter what I want, what I do, this will be the result.

There’s only pain, suffering, and sadness in that.

These feelings, such feelings are too heavy for me. I’m not someone who can carry them. I shouldn’t be the one to be burdened by them.

The only people I’m responsible for are me and the few of my precious comrades, that’s all.

I don’t care anymore. No matter how much the Crusaders conquer over the Pandora continent, it doesn’t concern me anymore.

It’s fine as long as only we run away. If it’s just running away without fighting, I can manage, I can keep on living.

“That’s why, I’m not going to try and save anyone anymore.”

Give up, give up on everyone else. Ignore them. They don’t concern me. Leave them be.

I am me, they are they. Everyone’s responsible for their own lives.

I’ll remember this. So that I don’t fail again, so that I don’t suffer again. I’m not a person who can save people, I’m not a hero. I have my hands full simply taking care of myself. I’m just one small person.

Yes, this is my resolve. I’ll abandon others and I’ll act according to it.

“Kyaa! Help!——”

At that moment, a shrill scream entered my ears.

My body that had been moving as if it didn’t even recognise my surroundings; finally my consciousness faced the outside.

The place I'm standing now is the same as the one I was standing before. A part of the dirty slums.

I couldn't hear the screams anymore but, in the alley just in front of me, some voices that seemed to be quarrelling came out showing that the scream I heard before wasn't an illusion.

My heartbeat became faster.

Is someone getting attacked there?

Then, quickly I need to—

“Ha,hahaha, Am I an idiot!?”

To have forgotten my resolve in just 3 steps, I'm really an incurable idiot.

I will not try to save anybody else, I can't do it properly anyway.

“Avoid troublesome things. Adventurers are such people right?”

I began to walk.

When I passed through the alley from which many voices were coming out, I unintentionally shifted my gaze towards it.

“auu, st, stop, please.....”

“Shut up! If you give it to us obediently you won't have to feel any pain, you know?”

“Hurry up and pay fucking brat!”

A girl had been cornered to a wall and three large men were closing in on her.

It's a clichéd extortion scene, no, the girl is good looking with her black long hair and ruby red eyes. If even a single one of those men liked younger ones, it won't end with them simply taking her valuables.

Thinking what else could be stolen, I felt disgusted and sick.

“Stop thinking foolish things.”(kurono)

At such a place, such things should be normal.

What would happen if I try to act smart and get involved in some big mess?

Those 3 men look like typical thugs but if they have the backing of some gang that rules the underground of this town? Even if it wasn't something so grandiose, there's a high chance that they could have a lot of comrades.

If I made someone like them into enemies, it simply won't end as something 'troublesome'. There's a chance that we'll be in danger 24/7.

Also, there's a chance that even with those looks, they might be strong level 5 adventurers and stronger than me.

Impossible, that word doesn't exist. I had thought that it would be impossible for an Apostle to appear and in the end, everyone was killed by that Apostle.

An Apostle eh? Haha, maybe one of those men is also an Apostle like the 8th Apostle Ai, no, maybe all three of them are Apostles.

When I was thinking that only Sariel was on Pandora, 2 of them appeared and at the same time in front of me. Considering how they appear out of nowhere, it's not impossible.

"C'mon! I'm saying to hurry up, aren't I?!!"

"Ah, noo——"

The man in the centre violently grabbed the girl who looked younger than Lily's true form.

Due to the momentum, her grey simple clothes tore and bared her white shoulders and body.

Seeing till that, I passed by the alley.

From behind me, the voices of those thugs and the screaming of that girl could be heard.

"This is fine."

I've decided, to not try to save anyone else.

Chapter 158 - The Power of Protection (1)

Robbery, theft, extortion, pickpocketing, almost every kind of crime related to money was something very normal in slums and areas where poor people lived.

Of course, Spada was no exception.

Even now, in an unpopulated alleyway, a pitiful victim was currently present.

“Kyaa! Help!——-“

Young, probably around the age of 10, the girl raised a scream asking for help but her scream was soon stopped.

Before she realized, in front of her 3 men were standing. All of them were humans including the girl herself. It wasn't really rare in Spada where the population was vast and high.

Each of those men had large bodies and their arms seemed to have strong muscles. Also, the numerous scars made them look even more villainous.

“auu, st, stop, please.....”

As the men approached with dreadful expressions, she felt that the men looked even bigger.

The words spoken by the girl were truly weak but the fact that she was even able to say that was praise worthy.

“Shut up! It'll be fine as long as you give it to us?”

“Hurry up and pay, little brat!”

Of course, the men wouldn't stop just because she said so. The men had no guilt even when committing such crimes.

“C'mon! Hurry it up I said!!”

“Ah, noo——“

As the man in the middle got impatient, he violently grabbed the collar of the girl.

She was also wearing the same simple and shabby clothes that the children in this area wore.

Let alone magical effects, one could tell that it was an inferior product just by looking at its material quality.

Due to the force of the man, the cloth tore open with a ripping sound.

The girls bare skin was exposed.

Even if one didn't have a young girl fetish, a man would get captivated on seeing that fresh white skin from the neck to the shoulders.

And, though she had a boyish, short hairstyle, her silky black hair, her red shining eyes and her cute face would definitely qualify as a beauty.

And if such a girl would be in a condition when her clothes were in disorder; it was obvious what those violent, beast-like men who lived by their greed and lust would think.

"Kyaaaa!"

As the girl screamed once again, the men, driven by a greed other than that of money, rudely stretched their arms.

"Oi, stop there."

A single man appeared.

Just like the girl, he had black hair but his right eye that didn't have an eyepatch was of a colour of deep black darkness.

He had an uncommon combination of black hair and black eyes, but what was more unusual was the sharp glint in his eye that the man was releasing.

Due to the voice that suddenly appeared, the men stopped their arms that were moving towards the girl.

But, obviously they wouldn't reform themselves now.

Becoming vigilant of the sudden intruder, two of them entered into battle stances. The remaining one was grasping the girl tightly so that she doesn't run away.

"aa, who the fuck are you?"

The question was very normal but it possessed an immense amount of threat and intimidation in it.

As he threatened, he observed the man who had appeared.

His body was as big as theirs. A white shirt and a pretty damaged black leather pants. His look was shabby, similar to those living here.

But, his toned muscular body even better than theirs, and his posture that left no openings, showed that he was not a civilian who didn't know how to fight.

The plate hanging around his neck was the proof of that.

A true guild card, there's no way they'd mistake it.

"Haven't seen your face here. If you're a newbie then we'll let you live. This happens here 'all the time'. Even an adventurer would be sorry if he cockily tried to butt his head in our matters."

The man who restrained the girl, even after knowing that the man in front was an adventurer, said that with a composed smile. His tone expressed that he knew that they still were superior here.

That's because, the man's steel plate showed that he was the lowest, rank 1 adventurer.

A mere beginner. No, considering his look, he might be a bit more experienced but not really much.

Also, they had not heard any rumours about some black haired black eye adventurer with an eyepatch that had done some great deed either.

That means, he was a normal rank 1 adventurer, at max he might be strong enough as a new rank 2 adventurer.

On top of that, he was unarmed no matter how you look at it. He didn't seem to have hidden even a single knife on his body.

The 3 men, after evaluating the intruder, came to the conclusion that he wasn't much a threat.

"C'mon, hurry up and get out of here sonny." (T/N: he says an-chan, and I couldn't think of a better TL than sonny for it.)

“nn, or could it be, that you’ve got something to do with this brat? Hehehe, you’ve got a pretty good hobby. Alright, I’ll give this as present to you sonny. No need to hold back though she’ll be second hand goods by the time you get her back hiyahahaha!”

The three men laughed in a loud vulgar voice.

And the rank 1 adventurer, with no change in expression, took one step forward.

“I said stop, didn’t I? Obediently let that girl go.”

The men who heard that calm voice quickly changed their atmosphere to a violent one.

“Are you going to fight us? Not a really good decision.”

The man tightened his fist and released a distinct killing intent.

“You should keep your adventures to those quests of yours.”

The other man also released killing intent.

A normal person would have been affected by that overwhelming presence and would have been overcome by fear.

“I’m telling you to let her go. Please, can’t you listen to what I say?”

As if ignoring those two men who were releasing killing intent, he spoke that towards the third one who was holding the girl.

“Hah, a fool trying to act as a hero eh? Oi, kill that bastard.”

With that voice as a signal, the two men began to move together.

“I see—-[Magic Bullet Arts]”

The adventurer who muttered that, that sound didn’t reach the ears of the three men.

That’s because those men were too far away to hear the adventurer’s mutterings.

And, the 2 men who had been rushing towards him were,

“Gahh!”

“Guhaa!!”

Fainted after getting hit by a black lump that was fired from the adventurer’s hand.

They didn’t understand what had hit them, no, even if they had seen it, they simply wouldn’t have realized what that black object was.

In any case, the 2 men had already been blown in the air due to the impact.

And soon their bodies struck the stone walls on the side of the alley with a dull sound and fell limply like corpses.

“Tch, this bastard! What the fuck did he do!?”

Due to the fact that the 2 men had suddenly fallen, the third man didn’t have the composure to focus on the girl and let go of her hand.

At that moment, the adventurer crossed over the two fallen men who were either dead or had simply fainted and had started running towards the third man.

But, maybe because he was used to such situations, the man didn’t panic and drew the dagger from his back.

“Dieee!!!”

Although he said that, the man’s aim was not really one that could kill in a single strike.

Although the man was in an advantage with a knife, the situation would reverse if it was taken away from him. So there was no need to uselessly go close to the adventurer and enter his range. He could simply slowly cut him little by little and take away his stamina.

Not to mention that killing someone inside the city would bring more trouble. If possible, the man wanted to leave that man in a half-killed state.

Thus, his aim wasn’t the heart or neck but the adventurer’s limbs.

The man decided to first aim for his arms.

“riyah—”

The man's knife shot out towards his opponents arm.

The adventurer's fist would be cut by his knife, no, he was sure of it.

pakiin!

But, it was blocked by a black shield that appeared suddenly.

It was completely black plate, a 20cm small square.

But still, the man soon understood that it had been created by magic.

"Defensive magic!?"

As words of surprise left his mouth, the other arm of the adventurer punched into his face.

"higiya—"

Letting out a pathetic sound, the man blew away to the other side of the alley.

His body finally fell and rolled and crashed spectacularly into something but the adventurer had already lost interest in him and didn't even look towards him.

Those sharp eyes that had been glaring at the man were now filled with gentleness and looked towards the girl.

"Are you injured?"

"No, I'm fine."

The girl, unhesitatingly gave an answer towards the man who had saved her.

And spoke, as she looked into his dark abyss like eyes while gazing at him with her deep crimson burning eyes.

"Thank you very much, for saving me."

Honest words of gratitude.

The adventurer also, answered with a wide smile.

“You’re welcome.”



Chapter 159 - The Power of Protection (2)

Think about only yourself, abandon everyone else, avoid troublesome things, don't butt your head in problems, that's the right way, the clever way to live.

I know, I agree to it from the bottom of my heart. But,

“Kyaaa!!”

If I hear someone scream like that, I have no choice but to help them!!

Before I knew it, I had beaten the shit out of those three men.

The last man had said to me – ‘a fool trying to act as a hero eh?’. That's right, it's exactly as he had said.

I truly am an idiot who would break his resolve in a matter of minutes. And even after the failure I had suffered and victims I had created, I would still ‘try to act’ as a hero and save a person who is in trouble.

But, what's wrong in that? Why is that not allowed?

So many people died? I couldn't protect anyone? That's why, I don't have the right to try and protect anyone anymore?

Nay, that is false.

Next time, next time definitely, I might be able to save someone.

Don't get scared. My body still possesses the immense amount of black magic inside me.

Inside my head, logic tries to deny my actions.

But it's no use. I can't follow that logic. This body, my instincts, my soul, all reject that logic.

In a situation where a young girl was getting attacked in front of me, I really couldn't do something like abandon her and ignore her.

And there is no way I would regret my actions.

After all, this time definitely, I was able to save a person.

“Are you injured?”

“No, I’m fine.”

The girl smiled happily. Her deep crimson eyes looked directly into my eye.

“Thank you very much, for saving me.”

Honest words of gratitude came to my ears.

No, I should be the one to thank you.

Because I was able to save you, because you thanked me, I was able to break free of these dark feelings that were dragging me to hell.

But, the girl doesn’t know anything about me, there’s no way she could.

That’s why, without saying anything useless, I answered simply.

“You’re welcome.”

Was I able to smile properly right now?

No, maybe right now, I’m showing the best smile I have shown in my whole life.

My heart has cleared up, there’s no need to hesitate any longer.

With this, I can take action as I want, I can walk while looking forward.

What I need right now is more power, a power to destroy even Apostles.

I’ll become stronger, stronger than anything else, and next time definitely, I’ll protect everyone—

“fufu, I really thank you. You really came to save me, I believed you definitely would do so, Kurono Mao.”(T/N: she uses ‘boku’ for ‘I’)

Those words, attacked me with a clear feeling of unpleasantness.

Reflexively, I jumped away from the girl and took some distance and put myself on guard.

“Why, do you know my name?”

And with the perfect pronunciation.

Both Sariel and Lily know my full name but they cannot say it with the perfect Japanese pronunciation.

My intuition told me, the girl I saved wasn't 'normal'.

"No need to be so cautious really, I am not your enemy."

The girl's smile back then cute, but now it feels strangely terrifying.

Just what the hell is up with this chain of events? Was this some kind of trap to set me up?

If that's the case, then I have no reason to go along with it. It's too dangerous to go against an unknown enemy, The best choice right now is to quickly run away.

"Ah, wait, it's fine even if only for a while, just listen to what I have to say, can you?"

Before I could take my first step to run out of the alley, the girl stopped me as if she had somehow realized what I was going to do.

But, without really heeding to those words, I decided that I really needed to get away from here as fast as possible but,

"What, the walls are!?!"

Before I realized, the stone walls on the side began to move after turning into a jet black swampy thing.

I realized the genuine crisis I was in but, the walls, no, the whole alley began to change faster than that.

Numerous tentacles flew out of the ominous wall and entwined with each other to seal the passage completely.

It's as if a wall of black thorns had appeared. I doubt I could even destroy it and break through that.

This is the first time I'm seeing a magic like this. To have changed the space in the alley completely is not something normal. It must be a very high level of barrier.

Looking closely, the bodies of the three men I had defeated had also disappeared completely. Were they also a part of this magic?

In any case, it's clear that this girl possess a incredible level of magical ability. Wait, she really isn't going to turn out to be an Apostle right?

"Who the hell are you? Why are you after me?"

Considering her words, it seems she doesn't want to kill me instantly.

For the time being, it won't be too late to fight after hearing what she has to say. Maybe I might be able to get out of here with just talking as well.

That's why to not show my will to fight, I didn't bring out my [Grudge Hatchet [Hararetsu]].

'Sorry, I know about you but you don't know anything about me, so first let me introduce myself.'(girl)

As if trying to make friends with someone after meeting them for the first time, with an amiable smile, the girl's body began to be wrapped inside the tentacles growing out of the black surface.

Those tentacles that had the same feeling as my [Anchor hand] completely covered her, at that moment a change happened.

The girl's ripped grey tunic and her long skirt disappeared and was replaced by those tentacles in the form of a dark black clothing.

If I were to describe the clothes in one word, it would be a mantle on a gakuran.(T/N: google gakuran to see what it looks like.)

Rather than a gakuran, it looked more like the military uniform worn by commissioned officers back in old japan. The black clothes were decorated with gold and silver ornaments as well.

The black mantle with the tall collar looked like those used by vampires in literature works and was so big that it seemed to ignore practicality.

Looking closely, the end of the mantle wasn't hanging on the floor but was integrated with the dark floor itself.

Maybe, this whole black space had been made by her black mantle.

Due to the enormous mantle, it wasn't clear but she seemed to have a sword, not a black wand-like weapon on her waist.

The girl who was dressed like something between a noble and a magician hadn't changed from her young look but rather than a girl, the impression was more like a boy now.

The fact that I was unable to distinguish whether it was a boy or a girl in front of me, only added to the ominous feeling I was getting.

But, as if ignoring that sense of anxiety inside me, and now that she/he had prepared for the introduction with the change into black clothing, she gave a satisfied smile.

And, that name was finally spoken from those small lips.

"My name is Mia Elrod, the one who gave you your divine protection. I've come to meet you."

I have no memory of knowing either the name Mia or the surname Elrod. I heard that name for the first time.

But I know what 'DP' means.

"Could it be, that you're a God?"

A God, a truly unrealistic existence was, now that I said it out loud, it felt a bit disconnected from reality.

But, Mia, as if it was obvious, nodded and answered.

"Yes, I am one of the pillars of the [Black Gods] of Pandora."

This person who named herself as a God; though I know that such magical existences truly existed, I still couldn't seem to accept that fact.

No, it is a fact there are existences in this world that provide a power known as 'Divine Protection' which was neither magic nor martial arts to a person.

But still, when one actually appeared in a no matter how you look at it a human child like form, there's no way I could accept one as a God.

“Muu, you don’t believe me do you? I really am a God!! You know where you’re pulling your black magical energy from, right?”

As the self-proclaimed God puffed her/his cheeks in anger, looking at that, I slightly became less cautious.

Also, I remembered that Lily had told me that my black magical energy is brought out from the ‘DP of the Black Gods’.

But, it can’t be helped. I really have no feeling of doing so.

“But I guess it can’t be helped since you came from another world I guess? They don’t seem to believe in Gods very much.”

“You know of others that came from another world?”

Since she/he knew my full name, I’ll ignore how she knew that I was from another world but the problem were those words that implied that there have been others like me.(T/N: I’m going to use she for Mia since the name sounds girly.)

“In the era when I lived, there were people like you. In fact there were many more than now.”

“Is that so?.....”

I can understand what she was saying but whether I can actually accept that is a different case.

“I can’t explain in detail though. Even Gods have rules we need to follow after all.”

“Rules among Gods, eh? Then, the fact that you didn’t save us even after what we went through is also because of your rules?”

This is truly unreasonable. Although one can’t depend on others for everything, I still need to hear this if she’s going to call herself a God.

If you’re a God then why did you not save even a single person? Why did you not stop the Crusaders or the Apostles? No, why did you not save me when I was being subjected to those hellish human experiments?

“Gods aren’t omnipotent. It is as you know.”

Mia gazed at me with a serious expression and looked at me directly with those crimson eyes and spoke.

“At least, in this world, Gods aren’t omniscient and omnipotent existences that can do everything. We live in a different dimension than this, in your words we live in the ‘World of Gods’.”

That’s why, even now, Mia in front of me was only a temporary existence.

“We, the ‘Black Gods’, are nothing more than existences that look over this world from afar. The ways in which a God can interfere with this world are very limited.”

Those ways are, making it rain, giving abundant harvests, and other such natural phenomenon for which humans pray to God.

“So the ‘DP’ you provide to a person is also one of those ways?”

“Exactly. That’s why no matter how much we struggle, we can’t descend directly in this world to save you. In this world, the existence of Gods is nothing more than a ‘system’ to provide power to people. We can simply provide powers that corresponds to the person’s own ability. And the person will have to fight against their ‘enemy’ themselves. Gods save those who save themselves.”

The Gods possess power beyond human knowledge but it can only appear in this world in limited ways possible.

In the end, even after being able to use a part of the power of a God, there’s not much difference from the God on earth. There is no God that can let everyone live happily forever.

Well, I knew that. For a God to save us, it was nothing more than a naïve wish of those who had abandoned the will to work hard in reality.

“So, this is the main issue. I cannot save you directly but I can grant you with strength.”

“Thus you gave me your ‘Divine Protection’, is it?”

Mia gave a nod. It seems she was serious from the start.

"I can't really believe that so readily. Leaving the fact whether I believe in God or not aside, I haven't even prayed to you even once. To have granted me DP sounds too convenient, you know?"

I certainly did wish for power, but, God couldn't have simply said 'Alright' and given it to me. That's just too ridiculous.

Power isn't something you get just because you wish for it.

I did receive power above humans but that was also a result of me having gone through that hell known as human experimentation.

To attain even more power, I won't get it just like that simply because God allowed it to me.

"No need to worry so much. I'll have you 'act in the name of your faith' from here onwards. A trial, seems to be a better word, I guess."

"A trial eh? I see, that makes sense. You won't give me power that easily."

But, that makes it more believable.

To acquire a DP, to practice while swinging a sword, both are similar ways of attaining power.

In this world, the power of DP is the real deal. Acting in the name of your faith will attain you more than just mental satisfaction.

"Just as you know, to receive a DP, one needs to offer upon their faith, but even though I say that, it's nothing more than trying to flatter and buttering up to a God. In simple words, it's more of a condition that allows God to interfere with this world. No matter how much a God cares for a person, if that God doesn't have the margin to intervene, he can't grant power to that person. And conversely speaking, as long as the conditions are cleared, the Gods have no choice but to provide their DP to that person. They cannot take it back just because they don't like that person."

If those words are true then it's a pretty fair system. The Gods are really meant to be impartial to all.

"You're the first person who has cleared the condition to receive my power, that's why I really want you to work even harder."

"I see, that's also understandable."

But, he wouldn't prostrate right now and say 'Thank you very much God!' either.

Basically, this Mia is still a self-proclaimed God.

Their talks till now, could have been total bull for all he knew. Mia still hadn't given a proper proof that she was a God.

Although, the fact that she could such level of magic showed that she was at least not a normal girl like he had originally thought.

"fufufu, that's fine, even if you don't believe in me now. To ask one to believe in them from the very start is simply the arrogance and selfish pride of a God. To earn one's faith, the God should be the first to give some benefit, right?"

What she says is reasonable.

Even in Earth's legends and folklore, there was a pattern where one would be worshipped only after he saved someone with the help of supernatural powers.

"That's why I'll provide you with the DP within the given margin of what I'm allowed."

"Weren't you going to give me a Trial?"

"Since you have the power to face off against those Apostles of the White God, I'll treat that as a trial which is why I'm giving you this power."

The White God and its Apostles. If she knows even that, does that mean she really is a real God?

"In terms of you adventurers, this is something of an advance to earn your trust in me. That's why I want you to accept it now."

Saying that she gave a smile and Mia came closer towards me.

Although I felt an unspeakable presence on my skin, it didn't have either animosity or killing intent.

Even if she wasn't a God, it doesn't change the fact that Mia has abilities far above my own.

Although, receiving DP sounds a bit suspicious but I should obediently listen here.

“Well if you’re going to give it to me, then why not?”

I still don’t know what DP is actually like.

But, if I can actually receive a power, or should I call it change, worthy of being called a Dp, then I wouldn’t really mind to treat this cute girl Mia as a God.

“nee Kurono Mao, I’ll tell you one of the conditions you cleared to receive my protection.”

Mia who had walked till right in front of me looked towards the tall me with upturned eyes.

Being looked at like that, is a bit embarrassing. Even though Mia might be a guy.

“What is it?”

I tried to answer as calmly as possible.

“It was that you didn’t wish for power to kill your hated enemies but you wished for power to protect others.”

“Power for protecting, is it?”

That might be true, now that she said so.

But, it doesn’t change anything I have to do. If the enemy is in front of me, I will kill him.

I’m still a murderer. Just because it was to protect someone, killing someone doesn’t become absolute justice.

I’m aware that I am burdening myself with a great karma.

Though, that doesn’t mean that I will go even a single bit easy on those damned Crusaders.

“That’s why, no matter how much you have to face painful things, do not lose that gentleness of your heart.”

Stop looking at me with those sincere eyes.

I haven't done anything worth getting such a compliment.

I want to protect everyone. That will of mine is definitely real, but, that's simply what I want to do.

I haven't been able to protect anyone till now.

"That's wrong. Didn't you just protect me?"

"That was——"

Simply an act. I had simply fallen for her trick.

Without even saying that, Mia spoke with an understanding expression.

"I apologise to have tested you like that. But, I know what you had been thinking till now. Rejected by those who you wanted to help, tormented by your own weakness, giving up on everything, you had resolved to live selfishly for you own sake. I know those feelings of yours."

It was true. I ended up averting my gaze.

"But still you came to save me. You came to save me, an unknown person, you didn't abandon me. You did what was right. No one can deny that fact. That's why, don't hesitate, next time, you'll definitely be able to save everyone."

In reply to those straight forward words I,

"Thanks."

Could only say that.

I don't know whether Mia is really a God or not but this child did cheer me up. I need to know only that.

"fufu, even though I'm supposed to be the one to thank you."

With a gentle smile, Mia really looked like a cute girl to me.

"Then let me grant you with my Divine Protection."

I can't power you up yet, she continued.

“Exactly, what will happen?”

“Let’s see, just like a miracle of God, I’ll—“

Mia touched my eyepatch with her fingers.

“—restore that eye of yours.”

“You can do that!?”

Of course, Gods are great! She said that proudly as she puffed out her chest.

“Then, can you bend properly?”

“A, yeah.”

My eye really will heal. Well I’m still in doubt how it’ll regenerate but I bent my knee as Mia wanted.

After kneeling down, I was at the same line of sight at Mia.

She really is as small as a child. Or rather, did I grow even more than 183cm?

While I was thinking of such random things, Mia raised her hand and removed my eye patch.

“Don’t move alright?”

“Aa—wait, wait, what the heck is that!?”

Well, it was nothing more than a tentacle that was extending from the ground.

Maybe she’d have much problem if I moved, countless tentacles wrapped around me and restrained my body.

There’s no pain but I felt unpleasant being wrapped in tentacles. If I was a woman, it would have become a trauma.

“Don’t worry, it’ll be over quickly.”

Saying that with a smile, Mia reached towards her own left eye and,

gurii—

Instantly pulled out her own eyeball.

In Mia's hand, a small eyeball that had a pupil in a shining crimson colour like the Queen Beryl rolled over.

"Wha,a....."

I was speechless due to the sudden act of violence.

Surprisingly, the eyeball wasn't stained in blood. It really looked like a clear jewel. But that doesn't mean I'm calm.

And while I was being surprised, Mia, as if nothing had happened, simply closed her left eyelid and held the eyeball with her slender fingers.

"Then here I go. From here on, my eye will tell everything necessary."

No, wait, wait a damn second, she isn't going to use that eyeball to——

gurigurii——

Certainly, Mia's eyeball was pushed inside my empty eye socket.

"Guaah!"

A feeling of oppression and a dull pain, and a feeling of something foreign invading my body ran all over my body. I got goosebumps.

But, that feeling also ended quickly.

As the eyeball completely settled inside my eye socket, my consciousness began to fade and I stopped feeling any pain or discomfort.

"Seek and I shall grant——fufu, overcoming my trial, you wish to receive my divine protection."

Hearing those words in the end, I let go of my consciousness beyond the endless darkness.

Chapter 160 - Power of Protection (3)

As I recovered my consciousness, the sun had already begun to set.

I looked up at that red sky like a fool, from the dark alley.

“What, the heck was that?.....”

I feel as if I just woke up from a daydream.

Yeah, I had been dreaming till now no doubt.

The sudden scream, the fight with the three men, the child Mia who called herself a God—although they happened just recently and I clearly remember it, but it doesn't have a sense of reality.

Maybe after 5 mins, I'll forget what happened just as how one forgets what they were dreaming after waking up.

“Am I too tired?”

If I really had been simply dreaming and had been standing here dazed all this time, my heart and mind might have been broken more than I thought.

Neurosis, was it? I had thought that mental illnesses were something unrelated to me but it seems I possess a much sensitive and delicate heart than I thought.

Shaking off such ridiculous thoughts, I, for the time being, began to walk.

By the way, where am I right now? Due to wandering around here and there while being troubled, I have no idea where did I even come from.

Maybe, that's when I began to daydream. But, thanks to that, my mind has recovered its calmness.

Since its already evening, I'll end up breaking my promise of returning by dinner.

First, I need to get out of this narrow alley and should get to a wider road.

Spada is already big, and I have arrived here only a few days back. I am not familiar with the roads and streets here at all. To get back to the address of my residence, I should first try to get back to my starting point.

Now then, the problem is, how should I get back to the main street from here but let's start moving for the time being.

It was already a dim and gloomy alley, and now that the sun was setting, it became more and more ruled by darkness.

With the help of my eyes that could see in the dark, I kept on walking through the same looking alley——Wait a second, 'eyes'?

".....I can see."

It was, just so natural, that I had not realized it till now.

I was currently using both of my eyes right now to see.

But that's weird, after all, I had lost my left eye to the 8th Apostle's attack.

But even so, my left eye was working like normal.

Why? How? I questioned but I could only think of one answer.

"Let's see, just like a miracle of God, I'll restore that eye of yours."

I recalled that abnormal act as she had pulled out her own eye and pushed it into me.

But, with just that,

"My eye, really healed?"

I had no reason to doubt. It was a fact that my left eye had healed.

Then all that happened just now was real and not a dream. Then that child Mia is actually a God?

"Are you serious?....."

Just as she had said, she really did perform a god-like miracle.

But unlike Paulo, I don't feel like suddenly worshipping Mia as a God.(T/N: not sure but he referencing Paulo Coelho here I think.)

No, if my heart had changed that quickly, it would feel more like disgusting brainwashing rather than reforming.

I don't feel like worshipping her for it but Mia did certainly give a clear proof that she might actually be a God.

Although, there is also the possibility that she was simply an incredible magician with an ability that allowed her to heal my eye instantly as well.

But still, regardless of what Mia's true identity was, it's a fact that she healed my eye and has the will to provide me with the power called 'Divine protection'.

Then, I don't care whether Mia's simply a magician pretending to be God, an actual God, or even an Evil God. As long as she provides me with power, I'm fine with anything.

"I don't know what trial I am supposed to go through but I accept it."

I don't know whether this counts as having faith in her but I still thank her from the bottom of my heart.

She helped me recover, even though it was through such a farce, when I was feeling down and also gave me the possibility to receive her DP.

But, since I don't know the details needed to clear this trial, it seems I can't along with it for now.

If I were to believe her words, 'her eye' or rather my left will tell me when the time comes. Till then, I can only wait for a response from it.

Now then, right now, rather than the details of the trial, I'll be happy if she could tell me how I can get back to my inn though.

"I guess God won't help me that easily."

There's no change in my left eye, that means, I have no choice but to find my own path.

Oh man, I hope I can at least get out of the slums and reach the main street before the sun completely sets—

"Kyaaaaaa!!"

I heard a shrill scream.

"Eh, no, seriously?"

Could it be that I am being played around by the God again?

It's the same situation as before. The only thing different is the condition of my mind and heart.

Well then, it really is an extremely suspicious situation but,

"I can't just act like I didn't hear anything either, now can I?"

That's right, I decided to act as however I wanted no matter what.

Even if this scream is a trap, I don't have the choice to abandon her.

I pray, that I can really save someone actually this time!

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Further in the alley, in a place with crumbling stone walls, a situation exactly like the charade made by the God was progressing.

"Oraa! Hurry up and pay!!"

"hehe, I know you've got quite some gold coins!"

Three thugs had cornered a young girl towards the wall.

There was a one-in-a-million possibility that this was some unavoidable situation in which an outsider couldn't and shouldn't interfere but, well, going by their way of speaking, I doubt it's anything else than normal extortion.

"Oi, what's going on there?"(kuroko)

I don't even have to examine the situation, I quickly appeared and called towards the thugs.

At the same time I didn't forget to glare at them in the form of intimidation either. When I seriously glared, the effect was so strong that let alone my classmates, even my friends were unable to look me in the eye.

"Aah?"

The three men turned towards me with a look of hostility.

Since I had just gone through something like this, I only felt a déjà-vu.

But still, it seems this time it's actually a real extortion.

The three men look completely different from the men I had blown away and though the girl's attire is similar, she's not Mia.

"Who the fuck are you?"

A stereotypical question came towards me.

For the time being, I was going to say that I was just an adventurer passing by, at that moment.

"Ah, you bitch!?"

"Uoh! Wait!!"

The girl pushed aside the men, and began running.

Due to the sudden actions, the girl quickly passed through me and disappeared in the black alley.

"Well, what can I say.....sorry for the disturbance."(kurono)

The situation resolved itself even though I didn't do anything.

To have run away in that small opening, the girls of Spada are really bold.

Thinking that, I began to turn around when,

"Oi, wait right there sonny."

I was called back.

"Aa, whacha gonna do about this! You hindered our important job!"

"Don't ya think that a little apology and compensation is required!?"

It seems now that their target ran away, the men have taken offence against me.

“You bastard, you’re just a rank 1 adventurer right? Trying to act cool like that! Pay up everything you have or we won’t let you get out of here alive!!”

Saying that, the skinheaded man with the biggest body drew his sword from his waist and closed in towards me.

The man might be trying to show incredible killing intent but since it had really no effect on me, I was thinking of something completely different like how the guild card on my neck quickly gave away my adventurer rank.

“Ou, what happened, how about apologising to us already!?”

Before I realized, that man was already standing in front of me without even taking a stance with his sword.

“You should hurry up and apologise. Our bro is an amazing warrior that can even use Boost, a rank 1 adventurer won’t be an opponent for him!”

“Bro cut away his arm with your martial art!!”

The two men behind him were calling this baldy Bro or whatever.

I see, so this guy is a warrior class who can use both Boost and martial art, eh? That really is amazing. I wonder if he was comparable to a rank 3 adventurer.

“Say, you don’t want trouble either right? How about you obediently let me go back?”(kurono)

They seem to be all fired up but I try to end this with talking till the very end.

But,

“Are you a fuckin idiot?”

It seems negotiating is impossible.

As that baldy raised that sword overhead with a single hand, he suddenly shouted.

“[Force Boost]!!”

Large biceps could be seen on the right hand that was holding the sword.

“It’s here!! Bro’s [Force Boost]!!”

The underling behind him gave a kind explanation as well.

But, I couldn’t sense any magic from that baldy bro. In the first place, he didn’t even chant. Could it be that he is simply putting all his strength in his hand normally?

“This is the punishment to have underestimated me. Be ready to forfeit one of your hands—-[Slash]!”(bro)

Shouting that, he brought down the blade.

“It’s here! Bro’s sure-kill technique [Slash]!!”

Once again a kind explanation was given. By the way, this time it was the second underling that did the explaining.

But, once again I feel sorry but this slash that had been fired towards me didn’t give off any intimidation let alone the pressure of a martial art skill. Isn’t he simply using all his strength to swing down his sword?

“haah, and to think I actually put up my guard.”(kuronon)

I thought that he might be actually a rank 3 level fighter and had prepared to use my Magic Bullet- Full Burst but it was totally useless.

I grabbed the man’s right hand with my left and stopped his sword attack.

“Wha!?!”

The baldy’s eyes went round with shock.

That pathetic speed and cheap swordsmanship, and that too without any Boost or martial art; I could stop it with purely my physical skills.

Well, it’ll be a pain if kept on swinging his sword around like that so,

“Pile Bunker!”

I smashed my right fist with black magical energy swirling around it like a drill into the sword handle and destroyed it.

“Th, the sword…….”

As I let go of his hand, he stumbled as he took a few steps back and looked at the destroyed sword in his hand dumbfounded.

“Hii!?!”

As he let out a pathetic scream, his underlings behind him ran away just like the girl.

Since I was blocking the only passage, the splendidly did a wall climb and jumped to the other side of the wall.

It seems, not just women but even men of Spada are quick with their feet.

“Ah, Oi, you guys.....”

And the baldy could only look at those two running away like a child who had separated from his parents.

Though with the amount of muscles he has along with his shaved head, he only looked disgusting with that expression.

“Oi.”

As I spoke to him,

“Wh, wh, what, what is it, do you still want to fight! Huh!!?”

Even while stuttering and shaking, he took a fighting pose with his two fists. It seems he still has enough energy to try and bluff.

But, I have no reason to go along with it.

“I’m going back now. Don’t chase after me, ‘kay?”(kuro no)

The girl in danger has run away and neither had they taken money from her nor had she been hurt.

I don’t really feel like personally punishing this guy either, After all, I’m just an adventurer passing through. I have no reason to act any more than saving the girl.

“O, okay.....”(baldy)

The man had a clearly relieved expression, and lost the strength in his legs as he fell down right there.

“if possible, try not to do such things anymore. If you work as a proper adventurer, you’ll still be able to earn money.”

Though well aware that they wouldn’t reform themselves with just those words, I still had to say that.

And, though I did nothing, feeling satisfied by saving her, I left the place.

Now then, where is the way back, it’s already dark now.....



Chapter 161 - The Witch's Lonesome Drinking

(Fiona pov)

I drank a fruit wine which didn't really taste that good.

This alcohol with slight sweetness and quite bitterness was one of the cheaper drinks in Spada and was thus, also the favourite of the common people, or so a talkative cat beastwoman employee had told me.

The cat-girl was currently running around, setting up the various tables in the diner of the of [Cat's Tail]. I will also need to order again in some time as well.

Appeasing my thirst with the drink with quality proportionate to its price, the alcohol made my body a bit hotter.

".....I, shouldn't get drunk too much."

Currently I'm stuck in what you could call a dilemma.

Kurono-san who had sunk in disappointment and Lily-san who was sobbing in despair; the reason and cause behind their sadness was completely different to each other but it doesn't change the fact that both are currently mentally unstable.

Even I felt sad for what happened at Alsace, and was also worried for Kurono-san. Lily-san was, well, paying for her own mistakes, no, I'm worried for her as well.

But, that doesn't change the fact that as a result, I'm the only one who is still in a completely flat state and that everytime I look at those two, my heart aches badly.

I have very less experience in staying in contact with people so I don't know how should I talk to them at such a time.

I'm not stressed that I'm unable to talk to them, I'm more stressed by the fact that I don't even know how to call out and talk to them.

At times when you start loathing yourself, it's better to start drinking, or so my sensei had said I think but, yeah, I can't really accept this.

Thinking back, I could only remember times when sensei had become completely drunk and I had to look after her and not to mention, she didn't even fix her problem either.

I thought this now after emptying 2 bottles of the fruit wine.

"haa, what should I do, Kurono-san?"

Currently, the biggest problem is Kurono-san.

During the incident at Alsace, we really did get the worst tragic conclusion but now we can't do anything to change it.

In the first place, we tried to take on the Crusaders with such few numbers and it wouldn't have been weird if we had been completely annihilated either.

The appearance of an Apostle was completely out of our estimations but it's not like we hadn't thought that we could be annihilated, at least, I and Lily-san did expect that.

I truly feel sad that every adventurer was killed in action but, at least I, have already accepted it as the worst conclusion and at the same time, I feel slightly disgusted of myself for the fact that I wasn't as worried as Kurono-san.

But still, as for the refugees that are alive, because of the actions they took, I only felt anger and didn't feel anything anymore for the victims on their side.

Those people didn't even try to know how much Kurono-san thought of them and worked hard for them.

If Lily-san hadn't jumped out, I might have burned that whole place to the ground. I was irritated enough that I really would not have thought that as a joke.

Thinking that way, Lily-san really took actions coolly and calmly.

Without creating any uproar, she quickly created distance between them, it was a perfect move, it's not something I could have done——but, to think that even that dependable Lily-san would fall so much into depression just from a few words from Kurono-san.....

The current situation would be completely resolved if Kurono-san can recover again.

And, not just in the calculating sense, even I personally find it painful to see Kurono-san in such a state.

Kurono-san, a foreigner who came from another world, the leader of [Element Master], led the adventurer alliance against the Crusaders, strong, and a gentle person.

He accepted me, relied on me, expected of me, and called me a member of his party, his comrade.

On the other hand, Lily-san is completely cool-headed and clever. She possesses cruelty to make anything work towards her own benefits. The only reason why she took me in her party was because she saw some merits in it.

But even then, Lily-san who looked at people with absolute advantage or disadvantage, was much more impartial and fair than the God of the cross religion. Only someone like her could accept a reckless rampaging witch like me.

In that sense, I am thankful towards Lily-san as well as respect her. I haven't known her for very long but I do feel a sense of camaraderie with her.

But as expected, having faced with absolute trust and affection from Kurono-san makes me happy without any need for logic and makes me feel comfortable. Enough that I feel that I will never be alone again.

That's why—yes, that's why, I'm the most scared right now.

What if, Kurono-san stopped being an adventurer? What if he dissolved the party?

"Something like that.....I really don't want to happen."

Every possibility of being separated from him makes me scared.

That's the worst conclusion for me.

Even though I finally met them, people who would accept me, precious people I want to protect.

“But, I.....”

Couldn't find any words to say to him.

Pathetic, extremely pathetic. I feel regretful that I had actually been living alone without communicating much with people.

If I am his comrade then aren't I supposed to become his strength especially at such a time? But I don't know what should I do right now.

I need to do something, but what, I do not know——I am facing such an unsightly and foolish trouble really.

And, just when I was caught up in all such negative thoughts,

“Fiona.”

I heard a voice.

There's no way I would mistake it. That was Kurono-san no doubt.

“Kurono-san?”

Raising my face, it was really Kurono-san who was standing there.

“It seems I made you worry, sorry.”(kurono)

And Kurono-san spoke the words of apology, but, his face was different from the time we had parted, it felt somehow much clearer.

Aah, I see——this person, before I could do anything, recovered by himself, he was able to recover by himself. I understood that.

“No, it's fine as long as you have returned safely.”(Fiona)

At the end, I could only hate myself who couldn't do anything but, rather than such petty and trivial thoughts, I am feeling simply happier for the fact that he has returned.

“Welcome back, Kurono-san.”

“Yeah, I'm back.”

Really, I'm so glad. It seems I can still stay by his side.

Chapter 162 - Kurono's Left Eye

In one of the rooms of [Cat's tail], on top of a simple bed, Lily was lying flat with vacant eyes.

Her young figure that remained unmoving on the bed brought upon a sense of both concern and abnormality.

"Kurono....."

At times, Lily would speak that name as if remembering again.

Her green eyes that seemed to have lost their shine, crossed the line of sight with Kurono's black eyes.

There was no one else on the bed except Lily.

But Kurono's eye, only Kurono's eye, was there.

In Lily's line of sight was a container that was lying by the pillow.

That container that originally contained a potion for restoring flesh still had that transparent liquid but in it, a single eyeball was also present.

The eyeball with the jet black pupil, it was the left eye that Kurono had lost.

After Lily woke up from the battle with the Apostle, she had found a chance and had secretly collected Kurono's left eye that fallen away.

Thanks to being stored in a regenerative potion, the eyeball that had been pierced by the arrow had recovered.

But to return this back to Kurono's left eye, all the optic nerves will be needed to be connected properly so in any case, it was a level of healing magic not doable for Lily.

Thus, it had conveniently become a part of her collection which she could gaze at silently whenever she wanted to.

"Sorry.....i'm really....sorry....."

They were words of apology which she had spoken countless times but of course they would never reach Kurono who wasn't even here.

But even then, after practicing apologising countless times towards the eyeball and Kurono's smell that lingered on the bed, Lily had finally become slightly calmer.

Or maybe, she had already dried up all her tears.

"Sorry.....Please don't.....hate Lily."

She had let go of her adult consciousness long ago and returned to her child consciousness.

But just as how Kurono had once explained, the child Lily and adult Lily were not different personalities. There was only a change in their mental age.

Just because she had returned to her child consciousness, it's not like she had forgotten having been rejected by Kurono and neither would it have any change to her passionately burning feelings of love.

In fact, it was in her child form that she had fallen in love with Kurono. She hadn't fallen in love with him after calculating and appraising things like his appearance, personality or abilities.

Lily's young heart that was fully devoted towards Kurono was currently swaying with anxiousness that couldn't be borne by a normal child.

No, in fact she might have been lucky if she was actually a normal child. She wouldn't have kept on being worried about it just because her loved one had slightly rejected her.

But, Lily who was definitely not 'normal' was currently being tortured by anxiety and fear that could burst open her heart itself.

And, after some more time of this never ending pain had passed, the sound of the wooden door being knocked came to her ears and Lily slightly brought her consciousness back to reality.

"Lily-san."

It seems the visitor was Fiona, Lily concluded after hearing that voice that she had heard more than enough.

But, right now, Lily did not have the will power to answer back to her nor did she have the will to do so.

“Lily-san, Kurono-san has come back.”

Just when she was about to sink back into her consciousness, hearing those words, Lily stiffened.

“Ku, Kurono.....”

Her thoughts began to revolve rapidly.

I want to meet Kurono. That desire filled her head instantly but, at the same time, it was a fact that she had been rejected. Lily controlled herself from jumping out from the bed.

“Let’s have dinner together.”

Lily was currently conflicted, but since she had not given any sort of reply to Fiona, words of inviting her came from the door again.

“Kurono-san is not angry at Lily-san that’s why you can be relieved and come out.”

Those words inserted a ray of light inside Lily’s heart.

But, all of her imaginations that she had done till now rejected those sweet words. She ended up doubting the truth of those words.

“Lily-san? I’m entering okay?”

Since Lily gave no reaction at all, Fiona became impatient and opened the door.

For Fiona, it was a fortunate thing that Lily did not have the attention to do something like lock her door.

“Are you sleeping?”

Since Fiona suddenly entered into the room, Lily barely had enough time to quickly hide the potion container with Kurono’s eye underneath the bed.

“uu!!”

Lying down face down on the pillow, she raised a voice of protest towards Fiona.

“So you are awake. C’mon, Kurono-san is waiting for you, let’s go.”

“uuyaa!”

Lily resisted by flapping her small wings and limbs.

Even Fiona who had no skill of reading the atmosphere could understand from Lily’s actions that she is still afraid of meeting Kurono.

“Kurono-san is really not angry at you, Lily-san. In fact, he is worried about you. If Lily-san doesn’t show her face, he’ll be sad, you know?”

“uu.....really?”

Raising her face that had been buried in the pillow, she glanced towards Fiona.

Those eyes had become completely red due to crying too much.

“It’s true. That’s why let’s go meet Kurono-san with a smile.”

If she had been able to say that with a smile, Fiona would have gotten 100 points for that smile but as expected she said that with her usual sleepy looking face.

But still, it still had enough effect to move Lily’s heart.

“.....un.”

Lily readied herself and got up.

In her heart, anxiety and expectation intertwined and maybe because she was in tension, her movements were somewhat awkward and clumsy.

“Then, let’s go, ah, you should wash your face first.”

She couldn’t show her reddened face to Kurono, Fiona gave a surprisingly sensible opinion and led Lily while pulling her small hand out of the room.

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(Kurono POV)

I am currently in one corner of the diner of [Cat's Tail] and was currently heavily reflecting upon things.

"Kurono.....welcome back."

Lily said that with a completely unenergetic voice and her eyes were slightly red as well.

There's no doubt, she was crying.

And the reason for that is without a doubt my mental state for the past few days.

Outside, I did say things like 'Don't worry about me' and 'I'm fine' and 'I am sorry' and was supposed to not make them worry but that was only what it was 'supposed' to do and didn't really get through to Lily.

It's obvious after all. Lily possesses strong telepathic powers, I couldn't fool her just with outer words.

And the result of that was this. I made her worry so much that I made her cry.

And though she didn't cry, I did make Fiona worry as well, no, in fact, she must have been more worried stuck between the depressed me and the crying Lily.

"I made both of you worry, I'm really sorry."

I could only bow my head right now.

Nevertheless, I could apologise to them like this only because I have finally regained some peace of mind and I'm in a much better condition compared to the me of this morning.

"No, it's fine as long as Kurono-san is energetic again."(fiona)

I felt relieved towards Fiona's expressionless face that seemed to imply that she was not worried at all about us.

"Kuronooo,uuu!"

While caressing Lily's head who was clinging to my chest,

"I'm really sorry Lily, I'm fine now so there's no need to worry anymore."

I thanked this compassionate tender-hearted fairy with words filled with my feelings.

And while we continued with our heart-warming contact, Fiona, who was the calmest here, cut to the chase and talked towards me.

“So, what exactly happened with Kurono-san? Looking at that left eye, I doubt you only calmed your heart.”(Fiona)

My left eye didn't have an eyepatch anymore, and had an eyeball that had a working vision.

It was obvious for her to think that there was some kind of reason and connection behind the restoration of my mental state and my eyesight.

And, I had no reason to keep my experience of that time a secret towards my party members.

Well, even I don't know what exactly happened there though.

“——I see, ‘Divine Protection’, is it?”

After I was done explaining, Fiona gave a reaction as if she could understand that rather than denying it.

“So, what do you think? Is Mia really a God?”(kurono)

I thought of talking about it but, while being depressed, meeting and god and having been awakened and energetic again really sounds something out of a religious text.

Saying this from a Japanese's feelings, using the weakness of my mind and heart, I was being fooled and tricked.

“Mia Elrod. I have not heard of a God with that name. Well, I'm from the Republic in the first place so I don't really know much about the [Black Gods] of Pandora in the first place.”

The only ones we know are the names of the Gods that had been named by the members of the adventurer alliance.

“Then, what do you think, Lily?”(kurono)

I asked towards the fairy who was still firmly sitting on my lap.

“Mia? Un, umm, un.....”

Lily muttered while thinking and making such sounds.

But, seriously speaking, Lily is the one here with the most knowledge about the [Black Gods].

After all she is a possessor of the DP of [Fairy Queen Iris]. She should at least know what kind of power is a DP.

“Ah!!”

Lily raised her voice like that, a *ting* sound effect appeared in my mind.

“Did you remember something?”

“Un, Mia Elrod is the name of the ancient Demon King!”

Hearing that answer, I found it even more suspicious but considering it more thoroughly, I could remember only one thing from hearing the word [Demon King].

“Could it be, the one that completely unified Pandora in the ancient times?”(kurono)

“Un!”

So it really is the legend of the ‘ancient Demon King’. I see, so that Demon King’s name was Mia Elrod.

I had heard that the Dragon King of Daedalus had the ambition to unify whole of Pandora as he admired that Demon King, when I was learning things about this other world at the Irz village at Village head Shione’s house.

The legend of the demon king is famous enough that everyone in Pandora knows about it.

In the first place, the dungeons were classified as [Ancient] as the same time when the Demon King was active and the existence of the dungeons and the demon king always appear as a set together in legends.

“In ancient times, it was said that he who accomplished great deeds in this world would ascend to the throne of gods. If it’s a person from legends, it

wouldn't be weird for them to have actually ascended towards godhood and become able to provide DP to others."

It was a theory I had heard before.

Vulcan's DP [Wolfgang] was a giant wolf monster and Su-san's DP [Hanzoma] was a legendary assassin.

Gods don't give birth to gods. Living people or monsters are sublimated as such existences upon death apparently.

Then, if it was a person that was the only person in the history to have unified Pandora, it would be weird if such a person did not become a God.

"nn, but, there's no one who has received the divine protection of the Demon King, you know?"

As per Lily's explanation, many people in history have tried to receive Demon King Elrod's DP. Even the infamous Dragon King also tried but, each and everyone had failed completely.

Reversely speaking, if there was a person who had received the Demon King's protection, that news would quickly spread all over Pandora, even a small village like Irz would get that news.

By the way, Lily had heard such rumours appearing three times after she was born but apparently all turned out to be fakes.

"Now this really has become even more suspicious."(kurono)

I am not stupid enough to proclaim "Yeah! I'm the first man to have received the Demon King's DP!" here.

A demon King that is extremely famous yet no one has been able to receive his DP. Rather than thinking that I really have received something that amazing, it's more plausible to think that that child simply used that name falsely.

"But, even if she wasn't the actual Demon King, it seems it's true that Kurono-san really has received some sort of DP."(Fiona)

"No, though my left eye did heal perfectly but——"

"That red eye isn't Kurono-san's right?"(Fiona)

I felt a slight unease when Fiona pointed that out.

True, this eye isn't mine. It was that child's left eye.

No, that's fine. What's troublesome is the 'red' part.

"Wait, is my left eye red?"

"Yes, that too a completely bright red colour."

Want to confirm? Saying that, Fiona brought out a mirror from her hat.

While awkwardly thanking her, I looked at the mirror.

"Wha, What the hell is this?!"

There, I could see my own deep crimson eye.

Since it had been comfortable working as my left eye, I thought that it had also become black like my right eye but apparently Mia really did shift her own eye as it is.

"It looks cool Kurono-san."(Fiona)

"Kurono's cool!"(lily)

As cold sweat flowed down my brow, I stared at myself who had suddenly become a possessor of heterochromatic eyes.

Is this real? Even those fucked up masked men did nothing to my looks but to think that I'd get an image change at such a time.....

"un, well, as long as I can see properly, I guess it's fine."(kurono)

That's right, what's important is the end result. If I were to complain for such a thing, I would incur divine punishment even if Mia wasn't an actual God.

"That's true, I don't know whether that child was actually the Demon King but you should still be thankful for that eye. From what I've heard, you should also understand the true form of your DP as well."(Fiona)

Just as Fiona said, I'm not in a situation where I am perfectly aware of the truth.

Afterwards, Lily also told me that by conducting a ritual in a temple where the black gods are enshrined, one could know whether one has really received some kind of DP and what kind of power has been received from that DP as well.

Only, if the DP isn't strong enough, it's difficult to distinctively know about it and the ritual will be a failure and a waste of money as well. It's a bit of a dirty business. I guess all religion related business are like this no matter where you go.

In any case, to know whether I have really gained the DP of the Demon King, first I'll have acquire a DP strong enough so that the ritual doesn't fail.

And until and unless I know what this 'trial' is that Mia spoke of, nothing will begin.

Let's just be happy that I got my eyesight back and a possibility to attain a DP.

"For the time being, I have no idea what this trial is so let's work normally as adventurers rather than wasting time aimlessly looking for it."(kuronon)

Since I had revived(?), we need to seriously discuss how to live in Spada.

"Un, let's go on a quest together!"(lily)

"Oh, this is the first time we three will take a quest together, right?"(Fiona)

Well, things happened after all.

It's not like gotten completely over it, I haven't forgotten it either but, I have recovered my drive to do things, that's it.

From here onwards as well, the days of being haunted by nightmares like today would continue but I won't do something that would make Lily cry.

"I'm also looking forward to working together as [Element Master] as well but——"(kuronon)

It's fine, I can still move forward.

It's fine, I still have comrades that would walk with me.

“I want to become stronger so let’s take on difficult quests that would test our abilities. How about it?”(kuroono)

“un, Lily is always together with Kuroono!”(lily)

“Yes, I have no problems with it either.”(Fiona)

The two readily consented with me.

“I want to become strong enough to defeat an Apostle.”(kuroono)

“Lily’s will work hard together with you as well!”

“Yes, this party really might become strong enough to take down an Apostle I think.”(Fiona)

Thanks for the reassuring words.

With this I continue with our adventurer lifestyle without any hesitation.

“Alright, let’s work hard to level up together!!”(kuroono)

Next time, next time definitely, along with those thousands of religious fanatics of theirs, I will kill an Apostle with these hands.

Chapter 163 - An Oracle to the Hero

The Holy City Elysion, which was the centre of politics, economy, everything of the Syncrea Republic.

Befitting of the place where the authority of the White God was concentrated, the headquarters of the Cross church [Holy Elysion Cathedral] had a pure white majestic look. In one of the rooms in the depths of the cathedral, 2 of the strongest authority holders of the Cross were currently meeting.

Unlike the outer appearance of the cathedral, this room had no adornments at all and was simply surrounded by pure white walls but with the help of numerous magical and physical methods, this room was created to ensure absolute confidentiality.

It was truly and appropriate place for these two to meet in secret.

"It really has been a long time since we have met, just the two of us, like this, right?"

An old man with a wrinkled face, that was the proof of his age, was smiling and sitting on an armchair that was simple like the room yet complexly created.

He was the one who stood above the millions of followers of the cross [Pope] Alexanderos the 11th.

"Pardon me for the sudden visit, your highness Pope."

The one who spoke with the hard yet low voice was a man with a height that reached 2m.

His sharp body line with his big frame, his dignified closed lips and tall nose and his chiselled face gave of the feeling of both beauty and boldness of a man, an ideal figure.

Even among that, what really caught attention was his eyes that had different colour.

His transparent-like long silver hair were slightly longer for a man, and though the bangs slightly covered his eyes, his heterochromatic eyes gave off an overwhelming presence.

His left eye was black like the dark night and his right eye was blue like the clear sky itself.

Though there were many who had heterochromatic eyes, none had a colour combination that varied like day and night like his.

In front of this man with a unique appearance, Pope Alexanderos spoke in a truly weird way.

“There’s nobody here to look at us, stop speaking to me like reserved stranger.”

The man who heard that, as if all the courtesy he was showing to the Pope had blown away, flopped down on the seat opposite to the Pope’s instantly.

“That’s true Alex, I still can’t get used to speaking to you so formally.”

The man who had removed his expressionless face that he had been showing till now was now smiling and speaking in a tone used with a childhood friend.

“Hahaha, it’s been 20 years since I was inaugurated as the Pope, even you should get used to it already.”

The Pope who had been called by his nickname changed his expression from his gentle smiling face shown to believers to a somewhat childish smiling expression.

“Has already so much time passed? When speaking of Pope, I can still only think of that old hag Crossray laughing loudly.”

After hearing the name of the previous Pope after a long time, Alex gave a wry smile and once again realized how fast time passed.

“In that sense, I can also only think of you as the man who proclaimed himself as [The White Hero], Abel.”

“Oh don’t remind me of that. It was a mistake of my youth.....”

The man that gave a bitter regretful expression was truly the 2nd Apostle Abel that acted as the mediator of the 12 Apostles.

Normally he would only show himself in a hood and robe covering his whole body and would always seem calm and composed but if they were to

see his rich face full of expression, more than half of the Apostles would open their mouths in shock.

“The legend of the Hero Abel is famous not just in the republic but even the whole Arc continent. No need to try and hide it now.”

In fact isn't that more embarrassing? Alex asked,

“No, my duty is already finished. I'll leave the rest to the young ones.”

But Abel replied in an old soldier fashion.

But still, Abel continued speaking after returning to his usual cold expression.

“But it seems, I can't simply do that just yet.”

On those words, Alex also turned to a serious expression.

“Hou, so that's the main topic for today?”

He asked what had happened without beating around the bush.

“I received an Oracle, that the Demon King will be born.”

On the words Abel spoke, Alex opened his eyes wide with surprise.

“A Demon King, you say? What's that supposed to mean? I haven't heard of such an ominous oracle ever before.”

The 'haven't heard' part applied to the word 'Demon King' itself as well.

In the first place, the word 'Demon' was used to signify evil that's why all those who lived on Pandora were referred to as 'Demons'.

And to call someone from the scorned demons with the title of 'king' was never possible in the human-ruled Arc continent.

Thus, [Demon King] wasn't referred to as a person who left his name in history but as a general name for the final enemy that needs to be defeated by the Hero chosen by the God.

“Even I'm not aware of the details but considering it properly——”

‘Demons’ already exist, the a Demon King would be an existence that would rule over those demons.

“But Pandora is divided among various countries. Is there any power except our own that has the ability to unify and control the whole continent?”

The Pope had obviously never gone to Pandora himself but since God had personally asked them to conquer it, he had been looking over all the information regarding it.

And as far as he had heard, he could only think of the situation there as the situation of countless warring states fighting each other barbarically, which was once also the case in Arc continent a long time ago.

“No, someone who can do that will appear now, that’s why the oracle said ‘A Demon King will be born’ is it?”

Alex had answered his own question to which Abel gave a nod agreeing with him.

“I’m the only one who has received this Oracle.”(abel)

“umu, it was the same during the previous ‘ritual’ as well. Including me, no other priest has received the oracle either.”(pope)

Their talks continued as if there was no doubt the Oracle.

Alex had no doubt that Abel might be lying, no, nobody in the whole Republic would doubt him.

After all, he was an Apostle. He would never do something to defile the name of God.

“It seems God has appointed only me for this task. As usual it is a completely unexplained demand but it’s not like I can ignore it either.”

With an expression that seemed to have given up on thinking too much, he gave a short sigh.

To call a holy Oracle as an ‘unexplained demand’ was not something that could be forgiven to a normal believer but because he was an existence that was closest to a God, an Apostle, he was allowed to speak like that.

“Then, you’ll be going to Pandora?”

“I need to go scold those three idiots who went to sightsee in Pandora as well after all.”

The three idiots referred to the three who actually went with the intent to meet Sariel, i.e. the 3rd, 11th, and the 12th Apostle.

Obviously, Alex knew that the 3rd Apostle Mikael had already failed as the leader of those Apostles to educate them without even being told by Abel.

And even if they were such troublesome Apostles, they needed to be put on work for the defence of the Holy City Elysion.

If the 2nd Apostle Abel also went away before they came back, the only ones remaining here would be the 5th Apostle Johannes and the ‘legendary’ 1st Apostle that might not even appear at all.

The 4th Apostle Judah had once again secretly went away on a journey so it was impossible to call him back now.

Thus, Abel could not leave till those three returned and the safety here was guaranteed.

But, at the fact that Abel was about to leave towards Pandora, Alex made an amused face and spoke.

“fumu, I see, so it’s the beginning of another legend of the hero Abel, eh?”

The last time the 2nd Apostle left Elysion was 20 years back when a huge invasion by heretics of the east took place in the Republic.

But, for Alex, the [White Hero] Abel was an existence that wouldn’t lose no matter where he went or who he faced which is why even when he was going directly into enemy territory, Alex could only think of poking and making fun of him.

“It’s not a joke. I’ll just roam around randomly and return.”(abel)

“And wouldn’t that mean that Demon King really would end up being born?”

Abel gave a nod while smiling wryly.

“Without any leads, in the first place, it is doubtful whether he actually is on Pandora. There’s no way I’d find him like this.”

Sitting on white throne floating in the darkness, an evil looking man wrapped in jet black clothes and laughing loudly; it's hard to think that such a stereotypical Demon King that appears only in fairy tales exists even in Pandora.

"Even the oracles aren't absolute, you should know that better than anyone else."

Expecting the Demon King to be on Pandora, and just because he went to that direction, fate made them meet and Abel goes 'So you're the Demon King!!'; something miraculous like that will not happen, even Alex knows that.

An Oracle is simply a demand from the God, it's not destined to be successful either.

The believers would work hard to make it a reality but whether they can really do it or not is a different matter altogether. Just as how the conquest of Pandora had been almost abandoned.

"Probably, a Demon King will be born no matter what. After the fall of Daedalus, every country would see the Crusaders as enemies and there's a chance that every country would unify against the Crusaders."

There is a high chance that the various countries would become one in such a time, then the birth of a demon king wouldn't be weird either.

"but, I doubt it'll go that smoothly. Just how many countries are there in Pandora? How many races are there? If one was to rule over all of them, he'll need to have absolute strength to do that."

"Still in any case, if someone like a Demon King will appear, it's better to take some measures in advance."

Even then, I'll have to go to Pandora, Abel said that as if he was troubled by it and found it tiresome.

"Then, should we contact the Crusaders and ask them to look for this Demon King, or anything indicating to it?"

"No, it'll only create chaos right now. And only reports about rumours would come back. Till the situation becomes a bit more clearer, or atleast till another Oracle comes, I'll move alone."

Of course, for the 2nd Apostle to take action himself was equal to a thousand man army taking action but Alex decided not to say that.

“Very well, I understand. Then I’ll make preparations for you to cross over to Pandora.”

“Sorry for the trouble as always.”

He had allowed three Apostles to go to Pandora for personal reasons but he didn’t expect that he himself would also have to do the same thing.

“That’s all for today, then, let us both return to our duties, your Highness Pope.”

And thus, after giving some words of formality to the Pope, Abel began to leave.

“umu, I had fun talking to you after all this time. Made me remember the old days. Now then, 2nd Apostle Lord Abel, have a safe journey.”

Saying that, the Pope Alexanderos the 11th put on his pure white robe and left the room with a magnificent walking pace that would make one doubt his age.

After seeing him off, Abel also stood up and

“As expected, the legend of the Hero Abel won’t end till he defeats the Demon King, eh?”

He muttered to himself in a small voice.

Kuro No Maou

- Volume 11 -

Rank 1 Adventurer

Chapter 164 - The Melancholy of Sariel

The flag of the cross which symbolised the White God fluttered on the Daedalus royal castle and showed who ruled this land.

And right now, the fact that the authority of the precious ruler Gaevinal had completely disappeared,

“You may leave now.”

Was proven by the young white girl sitting on the throne.

“Yes, then excuse me, Your Excellency Sariel.”

Sitting on the throne that had been painted white as per the style of the Syncrea Republic, the supreme commander of the Crusaders, 7th Apostle Sariel sent off the sister who had finished her duties.

Beside her was an empty envelop which had the seal of the holy cross insignia.

“This really was surprising. To think that the [White Hero], 2nd Apostle Abel, would be coming here.”

The contents of the envelope were in the hands of Sariel’s aide and vice commander, Archbishop Liuchrome.

The two had read the letter sent by the Pope and, though their faces didn’t show it, they were extremely surprised by the matter written in the letter.

“Do you have any idea why Lord Abel would be coming here?”(sariel)

In the letter it was basically written that they needed to receive Abel cleverly since his visit is supposed to be a secret.

Sariel asked so to her aide thinking that maybe he, who was much more intelligent than herself, might have realized the reason behind this sudden yet secret visit from the contents of the letter.

“No, I do not know anything. Whatever it is, the reason must be something very appropriate considering that Lord Abel would leave Elysion. It’s definitely not simply a whim.”(liu)

Unlike someone, his voice seemed to contain a tinge of sarcasm.

Although sporadic resistances were occurring all over Daedalus in opposition to their occupation, the Crusaders had already reached to all corners of the territory and overall the situation was favourable to them.

In terms of conquering, there were no problems. If it was something else, then that would be the disappearance of the 11th Apostle Misa.

In any case, she should be currently on the Magic battleship Gargantia while listening to the complaints of 12th Apostle Mariabelle and watched over by 3rd Apostle Mikael's saint-like smile.

By the way, 3rd Apostle Mikael had also almost stranded away somewhere but luckily she was found wandering around in Daedalus and they were able to avoid creating an uproar.

But even considering such situations regarding Daedalus, just as Liuchrome said, neither of them were a problem big enough to make the 2nd Apostle Lord Abel take action himself.

"I see, that's true."

Sariel also agreed.

Except during battles, she was completely on the top position as a decoration in terms of politics etc but since she did hear the minimal amount of info, she could also agree with Liuchrome's words.

"Since the details have been hidden, we should not make any useless inquiries either."

"Yes, something done by His Holiness the Pope and Lord Abel is the same as the will of God. We should simply prepare for his visit as stated in the letter."

Understood. Like an experienced butler, Liuchrome accepted Sariel's words.

In the letter, Lord Abel's visit was to be treated as a complete secret so it was instructed that only Sariel and Liuchrome should be privy to this matter.

Abel's outward stance is that he is simply an envoy sent by the Pope to examine the situation in Pandora, of course, the fact that he was an Apostle was not declared.

His objective was to investigate to report back to the Pope and so the Crusaders were 'asked' to tell him whatever info he may require.

"Archbishop Liuchrome, would you be kind enough to leave for some time?"(sariel)

To Sariel's sudden request, without crumbling his calm face, Liuchrome answered in the very next second.

"Then, I shall take my leave now. I'll ask the guards to take a rest a bit earlier as well."

Without even asking for the reason, he simply acknowledged Sariel's demand to 'clear out the people'.

Even if it was a mysterious order, he had no right to stop an Apostle from doing something. A mere 'human' could only abide by her orders without retorting or suspecting her.

"Thank you, we'll continue in the afternoon as usual."

After respectfully bowing once, Liuchrome left the throne room.

For the next one hour, no one would enter the throne room nor would anyone suspect what was happening inside it. The room was treated as a perfectly sealed room.

Alone, in the throne room, Sariel softly muttered.

"You can come out now."

But that voice which should have been received by empty air certainly reached someone.

"Well, sorry about that, looks like I made you worry."

In the throne room where no one else should have been, a single girl appeared from behind a thick pillar.

Blonde twintails, a thin shirt and miniskirt, and a simple leather breastplate and boots as equipment showed that she was not a civilian.

If one were to describe it in few words, she looked like a newbie adventurer.

There was no atmosphere around her that an experienced adventurer who had crossed countless battles to the death would have. She really looked like an innocent girl but her identity was,

“Welcome to the Pandora Continent, 8th Apostle Ai.”(sariel)

Sariel welcomed her, without showing any sort of surprise against the fact that the apostle that roamed around the world freely had appeared here.

“You’re cute as usual Sariel-senpai! But if you’re going to so ‘welcome’ then do so with a smile!!”

Sariel’s face twitched slightly on Ai’s words

She wasn’t angry, she was trying to smile actually.

“Sorry, Sariel-senpai is fine as she is.”

Seeing Sariel’s moving efforts that bore no fruit, Ai seemed to be reflecting on her words.

“So, what business do you have?”(sariel)

Sariel who returned to her expressionless face, without even trying to try and chat with her junior who she met in a long time, directly cut to the chase and asked her that.

“I thought Misa would have already told you that I was here on Pandora so——”

That was a fact.

After Misa returned back to the Royal Castle with an unpleasant face, obviously she had told everything, where she had gone, what she did, etc.

And obviously, the fact that she had met the 8th Apostle Ai also came.

“——I thought I should come and greet you properly at least.”

“I see.”(sariel)

Just for that reason, she had infiltrated all the way to the innermost room of the royal castle that was protected and guarded by soldiers all the time.

If a human had done so, it would have been a shocking news but if the people of republic were told that ‘an Apostle did it’, everyone would find it easy to understand.

Especially since it was Ai, who was specialised in hiding herself, that did this, Sariel found it even easier to accept. Since she is here right now, it was already a true fact after all.

“Ah, but I also have a request, will you hear it?”(Ai)

Ai clapped her hands in front of her chest and gave a wink looked just like a daughter trying to beg her father for something.

“What is it?”

Sariel who wasn’t really affected by that gesture asked very curtly.

“Hurry up and build the Daedalus branch of the Adventurer guild!”(Ai)

Even Sariel who didn’t really excel at thinking could figure out what was the reason behind that request.

Ai had been acting as an adventurer who existed all over the Republic, no, the whole Arc continent.

And this place was also not exception either. She had come to know, while hiding in Virginia, that a large network of adventurers also existed on the Pandora continent as well.

Naturally, an adventurer guild also existed in the capital city Daedalus as well but it was not working anymore obviously because of the occupation done by the Crusaders.

The Guild that Demons used and the guild that the humans of the Republic used, though both had the same names, they were completely different organisations.

In Daedalus, that had already become the territory of the Republic, a Guild with the rules of the Republic will be created.

At least for Ai to work as an adventurer here, she'll need the republic's adventurer guild to start operating here.

"I understand."

And, Sariel accepted Ai's demand instantly.

"Yay! I love you Sariel-senpai!!"

Ai ran towards her with arms wide open and Sariel had to resign herself to receiving her as well.

"The start of.....the adventurer guild will.....be needed soon....after all."(sariel)

As Ai continued rubbing her cheek with Sariel's, Sariel continued her explanation praiseworthily.

The occupation known as an Adventurer didn't limit to just going into dungeons and looking for treasure.

In this world filled with monsters, they were also an important existence to protect the people at every place.

Of course, dealing with monsters is the job of the army but they alone can't deal with it perfectly.

From the point of view of the regular civilians, adventurers are closer to them and protect them by clearing out the monsters near their homes.

And that's not all. Gathering herbs, personal escorting, delivering items, etc are also jobs that they take which are dangerous to normal people.

And furthermore, the adventurers also supply items to adventurer guild, merchant guild and even directly to workshops and blacksmiths as well.

And since they are an existence which is indispensable for the civilians, adventurers existed both on the Arc continent as well as Pandora continent and was one of the most common occupation taken by people.

Then naturally, even without the explanation of Sariel, it was obvious that they needed to start adventurer operations in Daedalus quickly.

However, Ai was currently busy enjoying Sariel's soft white squishy cheeks and didn't listen to the explanation at all.

"Will you be staying in Daedalus for a while?"(Sariel)

Sariel asked so to Ai without showing any sort of reluctance towards her excessive skinship.

"un, I'll stay as an adventurer here till everything calms down here. Actually I wanted to become a Pandora Adventurer but then I'll be unable to do my only job of 'world reformation'."

Ai, the 8th Apostles, actions were famous and supported by the civilians of Republic as a 'good deed'.

Defeating monsters that were causing trouble to even armies, judging corrupt officials and merchants; there was no way her actions would be criticised.

But, she could only take actions like that inside the territory of the Cross, i.e. inside the Republic.

Basically, she couldn't 'save' a person who was not a believer of the Cross.

Ai moved almost completely independent of the influence of the church but her actions of saving the believers of the Cross in itself was an act which could be said to be correct as an Apostle.

"If you're going to be here, then Daedalus will be safe as well."(sariel)

"nfufu thanks!!"(ai)

Hearing such pleasant thing from Sariel, Ai tried to kiss her mouth-to-mouth but as expected that was probably no good for a believer of the Cross and Sariel blocked her gently with her palm.

"There's one thing I want to ask."(sariel)

"Wha~t is it?"

Maybe she was still attracted to Sariel's lips, Ai was pouting like an octopus.

"Did the 'devil' who brought out huge damages to my Crusaders in Alsace really call himself Kurono?"(sariel)

Due to the case with Misa's independent actions, Sariel was also aware of the battle at Alsace.

Inside the favourable territory of Daedalus, to have lost more than a thousand men, it was a hard battle that was now well known not to just Sariel but to the whole of the Crusaders.

This battle alone was not called as 'resistance by demons' but was a clear cut 'war'.

And since Ai had appeared in that battle, it was normal for the supreme commander Sariel to ask her about it.

But to ask just about a single man named [Kuroono] was truly incomprehensible.

"Huh, could it be that senpai is acquainted with Kuroono-kun?" (Ai)

Ai asked Sariel with a grinning face.

It looked like a girl bullying another while asking the name of the man she liked but the contents were serious enough that it might turn into an interrogation.

"....."

Sariel answered with silence. She was unable to lie after all.

Ai, who took that as a 'yes' to her question answered the original question with a satisfied face.

"We did name each other after all. It's not some rumour or misunderstanding. He had a rare combination of having black hair and black eyes and he was wearing full black clothes as well so he stood out. aa, also a super cute fairy and a pretty witch were also with him." (Ai)

Do you know something about it? On Ai's such words, Sariel could only answer back with silence but,

("No doubt. That was truly Kuroono Mao.")

Sariel confirmed inside her mind.

The black magician that killed countless Crusaders and was called a 'devil' was without a doubt the same man that she had let go off twice.

"It's rare for Sariel-senpai to show interest towards an individual person, or rather, isn't this the first time?"(Ai)

That truly was correct.

The girl called the 7th Apostle Sariel was indifferent to her surroundings, anyone who had been concerned with her even a little was well aware of that fact.

She would simply defeat her enemies and complete the mission given to her by the church. In a way, she was truly an ideal Apostle but that made it difficult to judge her humanity.

Such a girl tried to confirm whether the name of the man she knew referred to the same man that faced the Crusaders.

Such a simple thing was a proof that the existence called [Kurono] was a special existence towards her.

"nee nee, could it be that you're worried for Kurono-kun? Or could it be that was your ex?"(ai)

~kyaa with a sound like that, Ai seemed to be getting excited by herself but,

"There's nothing like that."(sariel)

The girl was a doll. Let alone human emotions, she did not even have the survival instincts of a living being in her.

She was completely unrelated to the womanly emotion of falling for a man, she simply could not understand that emotion.

"fuun, is that so?"(ai)

Ai, maybe she sensed the atmosphere, decided not to pursue it any further.

"Well whatever, ah, this is my new guild card so if 'something' happens request me through the Guild."(Ai)

Saying that, she handed over a card to Sariel.

On it was the very common name Ai along with her class and other such personal data along with her adventurer rank.

On the Pandora continent, metal plates were used but on Arc, such cards, that too the type that were printed in huge number so that one could give them to people like a business card, were used.

“About Kurono-kun, if I get to know something, I’ll tell you. After all I do owe a favour to Sariel-senpai. I’ll use this chance to return it back.”

“No, I am——“

“So see ya! Work hard Sariel-senpai!!”

And after throwing words of farewell one-sidedly, she grandly left through the door and Sariel could only silently see her off.

“.....Kurono Mao.”

Sariel’s muttering, this time finally didn’t reach anyone’s ears.

(“I should not have let him run away.”)

The feeling she felt in her heart was without a doubt, regret.

Sariel was the supreme commander of the Crusaders. Her job was to kill the enemies, not to have pity on them.

As the leader of an army, she had a duty to limit the losses of her army to a minimum.

And, Sariel whose raison d’être was her work as an Apostle, to have caused damages to her army due to her ‘personal actions’ was not something forgivable.

Thus she regretted, she should not have done that at that time. Everyone has such a regret and Sariel also suffered from it.

(“Unneeded casualties were created because of me.”)

For Sariel, what was important wasn’t who died, but the fact that ‘someone died’ in itself.

She was not sad for the death of people, she could simply not forgive that she had made useless losses to the army.

Conversely speaking, it was nothing more than that.

For Sarel, a person's life and death wasn't important. What's more important was the success or failure of a job.

("Then, it would be ideal for me to deal it with it.")

And thus, Sarel resolved her heart towards the man called Kurono Mao that was hated by her Crusaders.

("If I meet him again in the 'next battle'—")

No, there was no 'if' in that. That man would definitely appear on the battlefield, she was sure of that.

Thinking about that time that will appear in the near future,

"—I will kill him with my very hands."

As if telling herself, Sarel spoke those determined words.

But what ruled her heart was not anger towards Kurono that was the reason behind her 'mistake'.

She simply felt anguished to the fact that she would have to kill the man that she had hoped would be salvation, hope for the experimental humans.

Yes, after becoming the 7th Apostle, Sarel felt 'melancholy' for the first time.

Chapter 165 - Zero Chronicle

The 14th of Hatsuhi, the blue sky was bright, befitting of a summer day and occasionally, a cool refreshing wind would blow.

This city called Spada, as I looked at the streets and buildings again, I realized that it was really a magnificent city.

Buildings tall enough to match with modern buildings were lined up, the roads were made beautifully from tiles and even street lights that worked with magical energy were installed.

I had thought of this world as having culture at the same level as Medieval Era but streets like this have the same beauty as modern European cities, it's really amazing.

Probably with the boon of magic, they must have developed different techniques and methods of construction and other systems that don't exist on Earth which only has science.

Spada was such a city filled with dreams and romance but right now our objective is to get some quests from the guild and also procure equipments and items.

The Guild and the item shop was located at the plaza around 10mins away from our inn.

An ancient relic Obelisk was also set in the plaza and was very useful as a meeting place or a landmark.

We three members of [Element Master] weren't really meeting up here but anyway, we came here to use it as our starting point.

Compared to the plaza of Irz village, the number of people is overwhelming here.

I wonder how many people would be there at the central plaza of the whole city.

After coming to this world, I am seeing a place filled with so many people for the first time.

Well, it's still better compared to the crowd of Tokyo but still I ended up feeling a bit overwhelmed when surrounded by such tall buildings and so many people.

"This might be late but Spada really is a big city!"(kuroono)

"I know right?"(Lily)

While saying something totally what a country bumpkin would say along with Lily, I gave a sigh of admiration while looking at the 10m high obelisk.

On the monument-like obelisk, something was written with letters different from the ones used currently in this world. The letters were giving off a faint white light as well.

Considering that the Obelisk was a thing of the Ancient times, this completely different letters must be what was used during those times.

"Lily, can you read what's written there?"(kuroono)

"nn~"

Focusing with her eyes, Lily gazed at the words that were shining with a white light.

Her gaze seemed to possess an intellectual light as if her adult consciousness had returned for some time.

"I don't know!"(Lily)

"I see~ So even you don't know~"(kuroono)

It seems I was mistaken about the intellectual light I felt in her eyes but as a reward for working hard I patted Lily, fuhaha, this damn cute fellow!

"Kuroono-san, something about Mia Elrod is written on the obelisk it seems."

While I was admiring Lily like a pet cat, Fiona gave a serious answer.

And somehow, she is also stuffing her cheeks with a litchi like fruit that she had bought from a cart but I couldn't retort to that.

"Is that so? Fiona, you can read this?"(kuroono)

"Yes, of course I can read this."(Fiona)

I am really surprised! To think that Fiona could read Ancient letters! I guess an actual witch is in a different league from the everyday magician——

“After all, the translation is also written there.”(Fiona)

Return my feelings of surprise back to me!

To the place where Fiona was pointing, the translation of what was written on the Obelisk was written with full explanations, clearly to help tourists.

Of course, it was in letters even I could read.

“Let’s see, about Mia——ah, it really is written here.”

As I looked at the explanations written there, apparently on this obelisk praises about the Emperor Mia Elrod of the great Elrod empire or something like that was written.

By the way, here rather than ‘Demon King’, the title used was ‘Emperor’ for Mia.

Well that’s normal. Mia was titled as a Demon King afterwards, Mia herself/himself used Emperor when he/she was active.

“It seems, a bigger one is located at the Central Plaza as well.”(Fiona)

“Reading that, we might be able to know about some specific episode.”(kuronono)

On this 10x3m black rectangle, only praises towards Mia have been written and nothing describing what Mia actually did is written.

“But still, [The beginning of History – Zero Chronicle] is a pretty grandiose name that they have used.”

[The beginning of History – Zero Chronicle] is the word referred to the various Obelisks that talked about Mia located not just in Spada but all over Pandora.

But, to say that the history of people began only when Emperor Mia Elrod unified Pandora is pretty arrogant in my opinion.

It’s basically saying that everything that happened before that is not ‘acknowledged’ by them.

To think like that, isn't that too narrow minded of them?

"It's really mysterious, on the Arc continent 'Zero Chronicle' holds the exact opposite meaning of the 'End of History'."(Fiona)

"Is that so——"

As I wondered about it, a question arose in mind.

"Now that I think about it, both Pandora and Arc use the same system of Model magic, don't they?"

Not just that, they both speak in the same language as if it was something obvious and even use the same letters and alphabets.

When you think about it, isn't that really weird?

After all, the people of Arc hadn't arrived at Pandora just now, they had no chance of 'cultural exchange' with them.

It couldn't be that it's a coincidence that they ended up developing the same kind of culture right?

"Well that's normal. After all, the current culture has been derived from the Ancient culture. In Ancient times, both Arc and Pandora were under the same sphere of cultural influence. The proof is the fact that our language is the same, though there are a few differences."(Fiona)

Furthermore, if one was to compare the Ancient Dungeons of both Arc and Pandora, the similarities are even more apparent, or so Fiona explains.

"I have only entered Medea(T/N: prev used media) Ruins but I believe that other ruins also belong to the Ancient civilisation."(Fiona)

"I see....."

I agreed but at the same time several more questions also rose up.

In the first place, what the hell was the Ancient Civilisation? They existed thousands of years ago but they still had influence over the current culture?

But, for the time being I set aside my curiosity.

"Unfortunately, we don't have the time to be leisurely sightseeing."(kurono)

That's right, we need to quickly to restore our adventurer lifestyle and start working.

"That's true."(Fiona)

"Oo!"(lily)

Or so those two gave an energetic response but before I realized, even Lily was now enjoying those litchi-like small fruits which chipped away the persuasive power in their replies.

"You guys are really unfair.....I'll go buy some too."

I, who yielded to the sweet fruity aroma of the fruits, resolved deeply in my heart to get serious after we're done eating this.

But, for me who usually abandons his own resolve in few steps, is there even any meaning behind resolving my heart? Such question rose inside me.....

Chapter 166 – The Man with 40 Points

There are two Adventurer Guilds present in Spada.

One of them is present, after crossing the second protective wall, in the upper class area, on the outskirts of city's central plaza, the Spada Adventurer Guild Headquarters.

Only High-ranked adventurer like Rank 4 and above, are allowed to use the headquarters, normal adventurers have to use the other one.

That is, Spada Adventurer Guild, School District Branch.

The School district is just like it's names, an area with science, it has the Royal Spada Academy and various other educational institutions, like magic research laboratories, Weapon Workshops, and Temples.

Due to the location, this branch of guild is filled with young people wearing uniform like clothes.

Of course, there are also people wearing helmet and armor and robes, the adventurers.

Presently, the ratio of Students to Adventurers is 3:7, but still the students wearing same uniform is more conspicuous.

To other adventurer who have never seen this would get surprised but to the girl Elf, Erina, sitting on the reception window, this scene is normal.

She is, today as well, dealing with adventurers with a smile.

「Erina-san, if this quest is successful, will you go on a date with me!」

「I'm right now working, please refrain from any private talks」

The beautiful elf, Erina, while sweetly smiling cuts off the invitation by the young male student.

To Erina, with light chestnut-colored hair folded into a chignon, sky-blue eyes, and with onee-san type looks, this sort of invitation was a normal scene.

「But, if you become able to take quest from the headquarters, then I might think about it」

「Really! In that case, I'm gonna give it my all!」

Becoming a rank 4 adventurer to take quests from headquarters is a very severe task, but if said with a seductive wink, there is no man who would not be cheered up.

While seeing the figure of students groups heading towards the quests full with spirit,

「Hm~, 45 points」

She speaks those words along with a sigh.

(With his appearance, grades, and parentage he could've gotten 50 points, but too bad his personality is of an idiot)

Marking any man is like a normal habit for her, after all she didn't have any lack of men trying to woo her since childhood.

(The branch is not good, Argh, I need to get employed at headquarters soon and meet a good man)

But right now is the time of waiting, it's the time of lower social strata, saying that she persuaded herself and without making any unpleasant expression, she has tried to keep working in her job.

After graduating from Royal Spada Academy's civil official course with great scores, she easily got accepted in the Spada Adventurer Guild.

Her academic background, along with having her parent's home in the upper class area, she is in other words an Elite.

And, if she continued her duties seriously without any big mistakes, she would be steadily promoted and in three years promoted to the headquarters.

Smoothly sailing on the path of elite course Erina, wanted to have the man who would be her partner with a suitable status and abilities.

At the very least, there is no possibility of a man who would attract her in this branch section of guild with rank 3 and below adventurers.

Of course, there would be some among students who have accomplished great achievements, but there is no magic to distinguish them, though there was magic, it's not possible to know about future.

Hence, she is today in her 2nd Year of the job too, stably trying to be pleasant to everyone while being the receptionist.

Having the rapid coming of men with points less than 50 recently she has piled up lot of frustration, but due to her skill of feigning innocence, she only shows the smile which can fascinate anyone, but not her true black feelings.

「Next person, please」

The man after the common student adventurer, was a man with attracting eyes.

No doubt, the moment she finds out the person is man, her marking starts.

(Hm~, his face is really good)

Having a face that alone can give the man 90 points, Erina's tension was elevated.

She immediately distinctifies that man didn't had any particular physical trait, and his race was human.

His nose was tall and outline was quite sharp, various parts were splendidly arranged.

His long slitted eyes and their expression, might scare most people, but to Erina, who was searching for adventurer and knight men, it worked as a plus sign.

(Black hair with odd-eyes of black and red, rare combination)

His black hairs were so long that they covered both eyes, but it was not like hair was grown carelessly and is showing laziness and dirtiness. On the contrary, it matched the man's atmosphere.

More than anything, the strong life force inside the black eyes that seemed like dark abyss of hell, and red eyes that seemed like brightly blazing flames increased the charm of the man.

(His eyes don't seem to have 'something' in them. It's bit disappointing for them to not be 『Mystic Eyes』)

But wanting 『Mystic Eyes』 is quite severe, thinking that Erina then looks at the man's equipments.

(White shirt and worn-out leather pants, huh.....I can't tell if you're an adventurer if you don't have guild card, why is he wearing this even if it's a holiday for him. And there isn't even one knife on him, he is too much careless)

That kind of appearance, to an adventurer is equal to being nude, Erina starts her re-evaluation from the lower section.

His rank was 1, even the student from before had bronze plate of rank 2, in this case she can't expect great strength based on his appearance.

「Please show the Guild Card」

While having feeling of sadness, Erina speaks out the standard lines.

The adventurer guild is just like its name says, used by adventurers, and ignored by common people.

Hence, for getting the services of guild to use it, it's needed to show the proof of being an adventurer.

By the way, at the time of applying for quest by a common person, they are lead to another reception window.

「Here it is.」

To the man taking out the iron plated guild card hanging from his neck, marks are added.

The thing she piqued interest in was not the nice vocal sound the man had. (He is quite polite contrary to his appearance)

The only one word 「Here it is」 is something that a knight with muscle brain, or an eccentric magician with brain of magic can never speak.

「Thank you very much」

Showing a smile that can be 100 points for a girl (Business use only), Erina takes the guild card, and starts reading the information written on it with her personal magic item.

In truth Guild card contains information more than what is written on it. Like what quest in progress, or how many the person has passed or failed, these personal information like information is written in it using the magic techniques.

Of course the actions of adventurers are not being updated in real-time, but the staff member of guild updates it based on the achievement progress of quest.

In the first place, a rank 1 guild card doesn't has much strong protection, so even without this small crystal orb like reading magic item, with some knowledge in magic it can be easily read.

And, within less than 3 seconds the personal data of the man is displayed on the display screen of crystal orb.

「You are Kurono-sama, rank 1 adventurer, right?」

White facing Kurono, who was nodding, she gave sidelong glance on the information and read it in fast speed, Erina couldn't help but feel disappointment that the information was just as she expected.

(Uwa, He's from Daedalus.....where the hell is this Irz, he isn't even from the capital? He's quite a country bumpkin)

To Erina wanting a man with good family, a country bumpkin with no surname is of no use.

(Sigh, All the quests are easy ones, and what might this 'black magic' be)
Erina read the information of errand level quests like medicine plant gathering, but

(Hm, Emergency Quest: Protection of Evacuees.....is he perhaps)

Though Erina was still a rookie receptionist, but just by being a personnel of Guild, she has heard more information than normal people about the 'war' in Daedalus.

Including the fact about traces of massacre left on the road in the middle of Galahad Mountains.

(I see, so he's a survivor with good luck)

But Erina didn't even think, that he was the one who unfolded the fierce fighting and successfully escaped till Spada.

She was only thinking, she crossed Galahad Mountain Range luckily by not being discovered by anyone.

And like that, Erina pushed the stamp of 'Rookie Level' within her heart towards Kurono while looking at his adventurer experience.

「What work might you have today?」

While browsing through the errand level quests within her mind, Erina asked him with a smile, without showing any other expression.

「I want to know the information about monsters, if possible about their habitats」

Did he not know about the existence of Monster List in the Guild, while sighing in the heart towards the man's stupidity, Erina explained.

「Over there is a book with the records of monsters information, please look at that」

Erina while vowing in her heart to let him enter the Royal Spada Academy if he is illiterate says as such.

「No, I did read it, but it didn't had the information I need, is any more information not made public?」

On the answer going over her expectations, Erina starts thinking.

All the information for a rank 1 adventurer like, monster information, weak points, traits, attacking pattern, habitat, dealing method and much more is written in the monster list.

If he could read the characters and talk in polite way, then he can't have a bad mind which can interpret the meaning of sentences.

Despite that, the meaning that what he wanted was not written meant.....thinking that a hunch sprouted within Erina's heart.

「Kurono-sama, what sort of monster's information do you need?」

For checking her hunch she asks, while praying to the Black Gods that her hunch be wrong.

「I don't have a particular name, but, err, maybe high ranked monsters like Salamander——」

Having her hunch hit the mark, Erina wanted to praise herself for still keeping a smiling poker face.

Because she felt, that Kurono was a man with just good face, and unfortunately, truly unfortunately didn't know about his own capabilities. Salamander is a famous monster of dragon species, based on whether it is killed or not adventurer can be separated in first-class or second-class. In other words, it is the gateway to success for adventurers.

Even with full power a rank 1 adventurer can never win against it, even if a party of 100 people of rank 1 adventurers is made, all and everyone one will have their everything including bones turned to ash with just one fire breath.

While bearing the scorn to someone idiot who is wanting something not in reach, Erina started explaining to Kurono politely.

「I'm sorry but this guild can't give the quests with high danger risks. For example, you cannot take the quest for subjugating a salamander if you're not an adventurer of rank 4 or above」

She implicitly declared, that this quest was completely unrelated to the current him,

「I do know that, that's why I thought of killing it as a freelancer, is it wrong?」

And abused him saying he couldn't be anymore idiot.

An idiot who didn't know the system of guild, it could be alright.

But, a person while knowing the system, having a plan of digging a hole, is more troublesome.

In other words, this idiot knows that he couldn't fight salamander normally, and has thought to kill it without a quest.

Killing monsters freely is legal and not considered as crime, but a person without any knowledge of their own strength, jumping in the nest of dragon is nothing more than sacrificing their life.

Even this current idiot could become a great adventurer in future, if he does his quests normally, and so the guild doesn't want to let a young person lose his life.

That's why to not let a person go into rank 3 above monster's habitats, the information except the escaping from high ranked monsters is concealed in the monster list.

In other words, this rank 1 idiot man is not understanding even a fragment of that kind-hearted guild's parental affection.

[ET: HUUUH?]

「I'm sorry, but this guild refrains from adventurers fighting monsters above their capacities」

「I, see.....」

Kurono makes a completely depressed expression.

If he was a man with great future, she would speak some consoling words, but due to his foolishness Erina won't ever speak anything like that.

「If you want to subjugate high ranked monsters, then there is no other way than to increase your own rank」

While wanting him to live like a normal adventurer, Erina explains in a businesslike way.

「Understood, then can you tell me the quest required to rise to rank 2」
For the time being, while being relieved that Kurono has some wisdom, she gave to the depressed rank 1 adventurer a quest.

「Yes, Kurono-sama has already completed many Rank 1 quests, so——」
Even though, gathering medicinal plants, helping village vigilante troops, protecting villagers going to neighbouring village, are all 100% safe quests with nothing related to fighting against monsters.

Inside them, helping with maintenance of the fence around village and all, are all quests one will never encounter monsters.

Of course, no one would fail in them, so Kurono's success rate was 100%, it isn't something one should be proud of.

Even so achievements are achievements, if he now completed some subjugation quests for rank 1 adventurers, he could easily be promoted.

Erina, quickly lists out the quests needed for rank promotion in less than a minute.

Kurono says the words of gratitude without forgetting, and taking the list in hands reads it.

Erina guessed he would choose the easiest one, with the subjugation of 5 goblins.

「Well then, I will take them all」

Stop fucking around here! She stops her intense urge to shout with her strong mental strength, a special feature of elves.

Calm down, don't get mad, elves are always cool, while persuading herself with those words, Erina politely dealt with him.

「It's possible to take all the quests at once, but I won't recommend it」
Why? To Kurono asking like an idiot, she replies in a businesslike way.

「There is a time limit, if not completed within it, a penalty fine would be needed and the fine for breaching the quest contract. It's better to do quests one by one without any risks」

It was a really polite and kind warning from Erina, but

「No, I will be fine」

He kicked it away.

「I see, then is it fine with all this quests?」

While cursing Kurono, who gave affirmation boldly, that he should fall in debt hell due to that fine, she completed the procedures of taking 5 quests.

「AH, Excuse me, I want to take them as a party」

Then say that first, you dimwit, while cursing within her heart, she replies while smiling.

「It will be fine, if you request after completing the quest, it will be regarded as the achievement of party. But, if you hadn't registered the party then do it now, later it would turn troublesome」

Then I will come tomorrow, while hearing shitty information, Erina completes the preparations for quest.

「——I will be praying for your success, work hard」

While giving the bundle of receipts, she said as such without any real meaning behind it.

「Thank you very much」

And then, Kurono left while showing a faint smile.

Looking at the figure of Kurono, with tall and slender body, cold facial expression, and smile like spring, Erina

「Sigh, so his looks were the only things good, really bad man, 40 points」
Leaked out those words of disappointment.

Chapter 167 – The Trial Is

After taking the quests from the beautiful and sociable elf receptionist I left the guild, and return to the plaza.

During the time I was taking the quests in Guild, Lily and Fiona were buying Potions and various sorts of items, in short, it was division of roles.

However though we had formed 『Element Master』, but we haven't officially registered ourselves, so in the end all three of us have to go to guild.

So let's go tomorrow, while thinking I try to find the two but can't find them, seems like they are still shopping.

Even if it's potion, are female's shopping always this long? I sat on a bench in the plaza which has the obelisk of 『Beginning of History (Zero Chronicle)』 in the centre, and wait for the two.

「Trial, huh.....」

While muttering that, I touch the top of eyelid of my deep crimson left eye. It was completely out of my expectations, that I would find the identity-like thing of trial.

In the first place, I opened the Monster list of Guild for fighting the rank 4 and above monsters for getting stronger.

As expected of Spada, a big-city, the information amount is heavens apart from what was present in Irz.

Well in the end, just like explanation of receptionist, rank 1 adventurer should refrain from fighting high ranked monsters even if it's their own free will, but like I care about.

But that's not the problem, but the fact that I found a clue to trials within the monster list.

Within the many monsters in the list, some particular monster names were releasing red light as if it was a sign.

At first I thought the list had some sort of magical trick, but the name of monsters in red light could only be seen by me.

It was proved when I asked the surrounding adventurers 「This is shining with red light, right?」, the reply I got was cold stares saying pitiable guy.

For confirming I closed my left eye, the luminescence vanished, conversely the light could be seen when looked through right eye.

Without a doubt, this red light could only be seen through my 'left eye'.

Thinking back, Mia said something like this.

「In future, my eye will tell you the necessary things」

In other words, this eye literally is telling me.

Along with the affirmation, I recall the drastic move of gouging out the left eye and transplanting into me, I somewhat squander my eyes.

Even god would say, couldn't you have done it in a more divine and sacred way.

After all this time, that complaint arose in me.

「Hm, Geez, You're rude to say that, even though I healed it!」

「.....Ha?」

I shake my hand off the eye, there the person with the same face I was thinking just now is standing.

「Is it you, Mia?」

The appearance is somewhat different from that time, but still has the black short hair, deep crimson eyes and androgynous beautiful face, the so-called self-proclaimed God, ancient Demon Lord, Mia Elrod.

The left eye that was supposed to be transplanted into me, is naturally with her, and shining with constant red light.

The black robe and uniform like clothes are the same as the students from before in guild and people within the city, by the way it's a male blazer.

On top of that is Mia's hand is, the same small fruit with sourness and sweetness and a not-yet-seen faint yellow milk like liquid inside a cup, it won't look anything other than a child buying and consuming food.

But, that completely food consuming middle schooler, boldly announced the name with the jet-black obelisk at the back.

「Indeed, We are the King of Elrod Empire, Mia Elrod! Just kidding」

The figure of him/her/it with the little tongue out had a lot of cute destructive power.

Even though, there is no trace of divinism anywhere to give presents and hail screaming 「God!」, to me Mia's remains as the 'Mysterious Magician'.

「I have something to ask」

I ignore Mia's unexpected appearance and disappearance, and ask what I want to ask.

「What is it, I can answer everything until it touches the God's Rule」

While smiling, it sat on the bench I am sitting at, moreover really close that our shoulder come in contact.

「My left eye indicated the name of monsters, is the trial to defeat them?」

It's horribly lacking explanation, but with this much Mia would understand.

「Yeah, roughly it's like that, but defeating everything is not the only way」

「What does that mean?」

I can't tell you more right now, while saying that Mia puts the fruit in the small mouth.

All the names of monsters that showed red light are monsters of rank 4 above. It won't be bad to train for it.

Probably, I might discover something new related to trials while fighting.

I throw another question to Mia who is eating the fruit with relish 「Delicious~♪」

「Then one more, Mia are you really the 'Emperor' written on that (Zero Chronicle)?」

On this obelisk, there is not even a word of the emperor's appearance, so just by looking won't give even one hint.

「I can't prove it for now」

「Will I know after I get the Divine Protection through completing the trials?」

Revealing a vague smile, That's right maybe, Mia answers as such.

Looks like there is no intention to answer me clearly.

In the end, I can't know the name of god until the ritual at temple, until I get the divine protection, getting Mia's true identity is postponed.

「Sorry, The people from ancient times, can tell you the magic and techniques lost in the current era, but——」

「It's violating the rules, right?」

Showing a somewhat surprised face, You're sharp, and said those words of praise to me.

「All the 『Black Gods』 are people who have lived in this world, People like me who got the Divine Protection are permitted to talk with gods, that's why there are many who tried to get the information about Lost Technologies like this.」

Even so in the current era the ancient magic is classified as Ancient and is said to be impossible to reproduce.

Ancient is the general name of the magic used only in the artifacts found in dungeons.

If that complex Magic Equation was deciphered, then it would've been added into Model Magic and a Magic system used in old days would have been re-created.

「Yeah, that's why I can't tell much about the past」

It's good, than boasting strange things.

「And, is there some other 'Strange Function' in this eye?」

I want to keep it as normal eye as before, it would be troublesome if some kind of beam suddenly fired from the eye.

「Haha, It's fine, it won't make any strange reaction to create problems during fights」

So this eye can actually read the atmosphere.

Or rather, is Mia reading the atmosphere or this eye only?

「Then I will be going back soon, anything else you need to ask?」

It doesn't feel like I'm getting answers in return, while making a wry smile,

「Ah, then one more」

「What is it?」

I decided to attack Mia with the question I had since the point I met Mia yesterday.

「Are you man? or a girl?」

Then, Mia changes to a sullen expression,

「It's just as it looks!」

and roared, as to show her displeasure, Mia left the place angrily.

When the small figure disappears in the crowd of people, I murmur.

「Just which one is it.....」

.

.

.

The talk with Mia was not at all good, but it did help in killing the time I had to wait for those two.

They appeared in the plaza while passing the crowd, if was already noon so we decided to have lunch at some place to eat.

「Still, there are quite a lot people」

Though it's due to the time period, but this quarter with shops serving foods has more population density than at the plaza.

「No wonder it's called Academy District, there are many students」

Just as Fiona says, the people wearing blazer like uniform clothes do stand out more than they did at the guild.

Obviously there are some people who look like middle-aged men and women, but most are young boys and girls of the same age as me.

Looking at that, I recall my times of a high-schooler.

Or rather, based on my age I'm still a 2nd Year student of High School, it won't be strange for me to say myself as an active student.

No, I'm not going to School now so it's bad to lie, After all I'm an adventurer who left the school in the middle of term, that's true.

「Kurono, you want to go to school?」

Huh, was I that much immersed in my emotion that it showed on my face?

「That's right, it would lie to say that I don't want to, but right now there is no time for that」

Unfortunately, I end my sentence with that word, but I get objection words thrown at me from some truly unexpected.

「No, it's a good idea to go to school」

That was Fiona who shouldn't have good memories of school.

「It won't do any good to study after so long?」

My ultimate goal is to acquire power to defeat those apostles, the most short and certain way is to raise my rank as an adventurer to fight stronger monsters.

Either way, it's not a problem that can be solved by learning National Language, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

「Oh, was the objective of school only to learn written knowledge in Kurono-san's birthplace? In Spada's schools, you can learn the magic, techniques, Martial Skills, and all things necessary to live as an adventurer」

I only had the image of a school to have 5 + a little more courses, but, I see, this is another world so there might be schools that tell things like that. Thinking back that students took the quests at guild, it means they're being trained as adventurers.

「I see, so there are places like adventurer training centres?」

「rather than that, in places like this the 'combat techniques' like magic and martial skills are studied, developed, and practiced, it was like that in the Republic」

According Fiona's explanation, they are playing the roles like the universities in Earth, like researching the latest technologies at places like that.

I definitely had the image of the laboratory places to be in some remote place inside forests with magicians, but in this world with magic, it's only natural for it to be researched in this big-city.

「Now that I think about it Kurono-san, it's not been even a year since you have come to 'this world', so why not take this opportunity to learn the basics of the basics?」

「Yeah, that might be good idea」

It's only been 3 hard months since the day I met Lily on 4th of Ryokufu Month till today 14th of Hatsuhi Month, though it was quite a dark period of time, but it's hard to say that I have learnt about this world.

It wouldn't have been a problem to live as an adventurer of rank 1 in Village of Irz, but in this big-city called Spada, I have to stand on top of many adventurers, so I have to learn many things too.

「Shall we postpone knowing the school system here for a later time?」

For the time being it won't be good if I don't complete today's goal, after that would be fine, no, after we become rank 2 adventurers.

「If I went to school, what would you two do?」

Though I say what would they do, the feeling to enjoy the school life stolen from me along with these two is swirling in my heart like a muddy stream. Along with these two, it would be more troublesome than my previous world, but there's no doubt it would be more humorous.

「Lily will also go with Kurono to school!」

「Yeah, I see, then let's go together!」

Now would Lily be able to not enter the elementary schools, I thought that for a second, but this lovely fairy is 32 years old lady, there shouldn't be any problems.

「I too. With you it feels like I can live a good school life, so I would like to once again go」

Maybe the lonely life at the Magic Academy in Elysion has left traces, her comment was quite negative, but because her feelings are like me, it's okay.

「Then, we three will go to school together」

「But I want to quickly eat noon lunch first」

That's right, While smiling wryly, we searched for a shop to eat and walked on the streets of Spada full of people.

Chapter 168 - In Search for a Robe

After eating our meal at this restaurant which had an Orc with a scarred face as the manager that made one ask – Are you a former mercenary with a long experience of being in service?, we left to complete our plan for the afternoon which was to buy equipment.

“There are so many stores that I can’t decide where to start.”(kurono)

After crossing the plaza once again, we reached the crowded shopping district that had various shops for adventurers lined up like weapon shop, item shop, a blacksmith workshop, and even a suspicious looking magic item specialist shop as well.

They weren’t ones used by normal people but even so the number of adventurers here was simply too big compared to a rural village. And even here countless number of people were passing through here.

As expected, since I’m a Japanese, I am used to such big crowds so I wasn’t carried away by the flow of people.

And since their various shops here and I since I had no sort of guide which I could have referred beforehand, just as I had said, I was currently troubled in deciding which shop I should start from.

When the number of people increases, the percentage of bad guys mixed with them also increases. I’m sure that in this city as well, shops that aim to fool newbie adventurers exist.

“Kurono look! That robe looks so cute!!”(lily)

Near my legs, Lily sparkled in high tension. In her line of sight, a white fluffy robe with bunny ears attached was being displayed.

That too, it was made for babies. It was a size which would perfectly fit Lily. This is what destiny must be like!

“It seems that shop specialises in selling magic robes.”(Fiona)

“Is that so? Then let’s go check it out.”(kurono)

After all, our party is one made of all magicians and completely ignores every adventurer theory used.

Since there are no warriors or knights to act as the vanguard, we [Element Master] had no business with the armour shop.

Well, the only one who needs a new defensive gear right now is me since I lost my [Baphomet's Embrace].

If the shop specialises in magician robes then I should be able to find a black robe befitting me, a black magician.

While getting excited about the robes I had not even seen yet, I cut through the crowd and opened the doors to [Fix & Fica], the magic robe specialist shop.

By the way, Lily was still entranced with the white bunny robe in display at the window and didn't enter with me.

"Welcome."

In a voice that didn't sound too welcoming, the middle-aged woman sitting on the counter glanced towards me.

Having a tall nose just like the witches in those fairy tales, she also had a glaring look but as if she was not interested in me, a customer, she returned back to reading the hardcover book in her hands.

As I looked as she said nothing at all, I judged that it should be fine to look around by myself.

Since I didn't really have much expectations in the first place, I didn't mind her being not very courteous and walked around the inside of the shop which was bigger than I expected.

At a single glance, half of the robes here were either black, grey or white.

The robes had been displayed on some mannequins but will they arrange it in a different size for me if I ask them to?

While thinking such things, I looked at the various types of robes casually.

Unlike the Irz village's item shop, most of the articles displayed had a price tag attached to it.

Since they had no intention to negotiate the prices, that's why they can show such a dry attitude towards customers, eh? No, maybe that's just how that witch-like old lady is normally.

"What do you think?"(Fiona)

Suddenly, Fiona asked me while standing beside me.

"Since I can't really appraise them, I am not sure about anything with just seeing them."(kurono)

There was not a single one here that was a high class item with a defensive magical enchantment that even I could sense. Also, with every robe, the affinity to an element, elemental resistances and the level of defensive magic, all change.

More than half of the ones here had used the skin of monsters, without knowing what monster had been used I couldn't even roughly discern what kind of property it would have.

"I'll just obediently ask if they have any robe that is suited for black magic."(kurono)

"Considering the grade of this shop, I doubt something very high quality would appear though."(Fiona)

Fiona-san, those things shouldn't be said out loud even if you think that's true.

While hoping that miss shopkeeper didn't hear that, I headed towards the counter.

"Excuse me."(kurono)

"What?"

The woman looked at me with a really sharp glare.

Un, though she's wearing a simple apron that had the shop's logo on it, if she were to wear the same clothes as Fiona, she'd completely look like a perfect witch.

While holding such rude thoughts, for the time being I asked for the thing I was looking for.

“Do you have a robe called [Baphomet’s Embrace]?”(kuroono)

It had been destroyed after the fight with Cyprus and then taking on Fiona’s Aur Soleil, but if possible, I’d like to get the same thing——

“Don’t talk foolish Rank 1, those apprentice use robes over there would suit you more.”

An incredible abuse came at me.

At the end of the line where she pointed, a simple black robe with a ‘For newcomer use!’ board was kept.

“Umm, I had been wearing [Baphomet’s Embrace] before as well so I’m looking for a new one. Do you know of any store that might be keeping them?”(Kuroono)

Since this old woman doesn’t seem to be interested in selling me one even if she had one, I changed my question.

“Had been wearing before? Hah, what, so you’re a spoiled brat of some noble? Then ask your wealthy ‘papa’ to take you to one of those ‘upper’ stores. They’ll have the ‘amazing magic equipments’ that you’re looking for.”

What an incredible level of sarcasm. Let alone the son of a noble, I’m not even a resident of this world. Family and lineage is the last thing that has any connection with me.

But, if I try to interpret her words well, then these ‘upper’ stores, basically the stores in the upper strata of the city might have [Baphomet’s Embrace].

But that’s troublesome. I’ll need some kind of big achievement to be allowed to pass to the upper levels or I’d need a special level of permission.

After arriving to Spada, I had received the explanation and reward for the emergency quest from the guild HQ but that was a one-time thing allowed by the Spada government.

To normally go the upper levels, I’ll need to become rank 4 as an adventurer.

“If you want high level equipment like your companion witch then go to the upper levels. Only come here when you’re coming to the school or the guild.

I'm not trying to make fun of you but an ignorant rich kid like you would catch the eyes of bad guys that live here."

Hihhi, the old woman laughed as if she was the representative of those bad guys but I decided to ask something that caught my attention.

"Her equipment is really that amazing?"

I mean of Fiona, of course.

If I recall correctly, she had said that she built it as her graduation exam in Elysion magic academy I think.

Normally, she seems to create magic items but as expected, to collect materials, plan, and manufacture it all alone, such memories would definitely become a far too gloomy of an episode to listen to while chatting over a cup of tea.

"Even without appraising, you can tell what kind of thing is that in a single glance. Abyss silk and feathers of a Black Bird, on top of it, there's something included in the lining as well. If she was not acting as your bodyguard, that witch would definitely be a rank 4 adventurer."

I don't really understand but apparently some amazing ingredients have been used by her.

Also, I have become a rich noble brat and Fiona has apparently become my escort for some reason.

"Well, the fairy who's admiring the bear rabbit Kid's robe outside also has an Ancient velvet for clothing. Who made it in the size of a child's I wonder."

Not a rabbit but a bear rabbit?! No, rather than that,

"That's something I gave to her as a present. Got any problem?"(kurono)

"You really are of a high status eh? To give such a high class present to a pet, nobles really do have extreme hobbies hihhihi."

As expected, I became irritated on seeing Lily being treated as a pet.

"She isn't a pet, she's a precious comrade of mine."(kurono)

“Comrade? Hihi, so is that a new trend? Well, it’s better than just spoiling her as you please.”

It seems I’ll have to explain from the start that I’m not just some rich noble brat who’s playing as an adventurer along with a beautiful escort and a cute pet.

But, I guess the reason must be that I asked for a high class item even though I’m just a rank 1 adventurer.

Well, I don’t have the image of [Baphomet’s Embrace] as a high class item that I can’t deserve since I’m used to wearing it but to an outsider like her, it would really look like that.

It can’t be helped, it’s not like I had much money and I didn’t know how much would a high class item like that cost so now at least I know that it’s too costly for me right now.

Right now, I should complete some quests and collect some money then go to buy such items.

Till then, yeah, let’s go with that newbie magician robe.

“Can I have that?”(kurono)

As I showed the will to buy the robe she had pointed out earlier, her sharp eyes showed a slight surprise.

“hee, to take this old woman’s sarcasm honestly, did you have some sheltered upbringing, boy?”

“I’m not some noble, I really am a rank 1 adventurer.”

Don’t try to act cool. While still not believing me, she went inside the store to bring the robe.

As she returned before even a minute had passed, in her hands was the same robe displayed here with one bigger size.

“10,000 klan.”

After asking for the money that held no discount, I was about to bring out 1 gold coin, but stopped.

That gold coin was earned at Irz village created in Daedalus. After being captured by the Crusaers, I doubt these coins with dragon print on them are still in circulation.

Thinking that I had no reason to let go of a coin that held a lot of memories for me, I decided to pay it out of the reward of the emergency quest I had received in klans.

“Thank you for your patronage.”

After hearing her shopkeeper like words instead of witch-like, I wore the robe there itself.

The feeling wasn't bad but it was nowhere near the sensation of becoming a part of my body that the [Baphomet's Embrace] gave.

Now that I think about it, I didn't feel hot even when wearing it in summer but this one made it hotter almost instantly.

Still, it's not unbearable. Without showing any discomfort, I decided to leave since I was done with my business here but then I stopped, and asked her.

“That, rabbit robe, how much does it cost?”(kuroono)

“37,000 klan”

That much!?!

It's a cost big enough that would make me hesitate to buy instantly.

“I'll come back to buy it after I reach rank 2.”(kuroono)

“Hihihi, I'll be looking forward to it.”

While taking her ill gaze on my back, I left the store.

Now then, next is weapons but the fact that I'm a rank 1 and my lack of funds is clear. It'll probably be impossible to get both, a wand of [Black Ballista Replica] and swords for Magic Sword Arts.

After leaving the store with Fiona, and pulling away Lily who seemed to have gotten attached to that bunny robe, we left towards the weapon shop.

Chapter 169 - Mordred Weapon Company (1)

We entered the weapon shop with the giant board [Modred Weapon company – Academy district branch].

The reason why I chose this store was because it greatly stood out even in this neighbourhood.

In the first place, if I wanted a high class weapon, I'll have to go to the upper strata in any case.

If I had to buy just normal weapons, then it doesn't matter where I buy it from.

And without much expectations, hoping only to get at least some swords for my magic sword arts, I passed through the giant wooden door.

The inside of the store seemed to be bustling with people. A big muscled man was testing a battle hammer, goblins were comparing daggers and knives, and a nervous looking magician elf was being troubled in deciding over the staff and wand in his hand.

Further inside the store, a sharp-styled golem was swinging around a large sword and a storekeeper was trying to stop him somehow.

It was noisy yet get off an energetic atmosphere which seemed suitable for an adventurer's weapon shop.

For the time being, let's look for a replacement for my [Black ballista Replica] and also find some long swords in reasonable price.

Lily and Fiona have gone to check out magic item accessories. It'll be nice if they find something good.

"yup, I have no idea what's good or bad about these ones....."(kurono)

I haven't searched all over the shop but I did go through the wands and swords corner and decided that it'd be better to ask the shopkeeper for advice and moved towards the counter.

"Welcome! What are you looking for today?"

A normal looking man, much more amicable than that witch old hag, greeted me.

On his apron, a pirate-like skull emblem was printed along with the words [Mordred Weapon Company].

No matter how much you guys are dealing with arms and deadly weapons, isn't that logo a bit too straight?

But I don't have any reason to mind that so I quickly conveyed my need.

"Do you have a wand that specialises in black magic?"

"Well, that's a rare type of magic you use. Unfortunately, we only deal with major common weapons here so minor demand weapons like that aren't available here. You could have one order-made at the head branch but considering your rank, that'd be difficult you see?"

Of course I didn't have any appraisal skills so I have no choice but to depend on the shopkeeper.

Fiona had a much better eye for this than me but apparently she's not knowledgeable about black magic either so she couldn't really help.

Guess I have no choice, I'll have to use black magic without a wand like old times. I should be able to take down enemies like Salamander for now somehow.

"Then forget about the wand. I need 10 long swords but can they be prepared in around 100,000 klans?"

I did mention the price because they might be having some costly top class swords here as well but for some reason the shopkeeper looked at me with a pitiful warm gaze and spoke.

"Dear customer, this might be none of my business but you should fight against being a gofer from the start, you know?"

Eh, What? Gofer? What the hell?

"Well, it happens a lot when an apprentice magician catches an strong upperclassman's eye and gets turned into a Gofer for him but being underestimated like that all the time is not good really—"

It seems once again a misunderstanding is being created.

First it was a noble brat, this time it's a weak 1st year magician.

My face definitely doesn't give that feeling so was it a mistake for me to buy that apprentice robe?

"Um, those swords are all for my use so it's fine."(kurono)

I did try to fix his misunderstanding but going by the man's eyes, I don't think he believed me.

Well it's obvious. An apprentice magician has no use for 10 swords after all, normally speaking.

"Anyway, if 1 sword is to cost 10,000 klan, then only the lowest level of swords can be prepared, but is that fine?"

With blackening I can turn even blunt swords to sharp ones so even though low class, new swords should be able to work against at least low level monsters.

Well, I still have the [Hararetsu] so it's not really a prob---

"Ah."

I remembered now.

That's right, I can use cursed weapons. It's been a long time since I went to buy something so I had completely forgotten about this.

I should be able to get a pretty good weapon with 100,000 at least.

"Excuse me, do you keep Cursed Weapons?"

I tried asking but,

"Cursed weapons?"

The man started looking at me even more with sympathetic eyes.

"I understand that you're frustrated as a gofer but you'll end your life with those, you know?"

I was warned.

Oh, I give up! I didn't expect having a low rank as such a big problem.....

While I was thinking of how to make him bring out the cursed weapons,

"Ou, I'm here old man!"

A third person's voice came.

"Ah, Jouto-sama! Welcome again!"

The shopkeeper, as if he had forgotten about me, went to that man called Jouto and started talking politely.

This man called Jouto was werecat, and was also a swordsman considering that his equipment looked like Nino.

But unlike the now dead swordsman of Irz, this one had a face like a Siamese cat and had eyes that seemed to possess a confidence in his own strength and was looking at the shopkeeper with eyes that looked at a lower ranked person.

On his chest, a silver guild card was hanging as a proof of his strength.

A rank 3 adventurer, a rank high enough to gain preference over a lower ranked person like me.

Well, I don't feel good about this though.

"—Please wait a second, I'll bring it here in a moment."

The old man, probably to bring a sword, left the counter.

I stood there silently as a spectator.

Then, that werecat, while folding his arms as if bored, turned to look towards me.

".....fuh."

Giving a snort, he looked away after losing interest.

Well sure you have the higher rank but that attitude really is pissing me off. Even Nino who came to pick a quarrel with me at the very first meeting gave a better impression.

As his image overlapped with my friend's, displeasure arose in me towards his disgusting attitude.

But I'm not short tempered enough to pick a fight over just that. After all, Spada is filled with adventurers. I probably won't even meet him ever again.

While I was thinking that, the shopkeeper returned.

With a giant sword wrapped in cloth.

"Here, please take a look!"

Proud of it, the man gave the sword to Jouto.

Jouto he easily took the sword and removed the cloth wrapped around it.

"Oh, could this be——"(jouto)

A curious gaze filled his eyes.

But, I was even more surprised than him.

"Yes, it just arrived yesterday, [Fang Sword – Evil Eater]!"

On the large blade that looked like a single fang of a monster, countless scars of going through various battles could be seen. The grip also seemed aged and I had definitely seen it being swung around countless times beside me. No doubt, this is Vulcan's sword.

"Is it real?"(jouto)

"Yes, we already appraised it as a proof. Should I bring out the certificate if you want?"

Jouto smiled and refused.

"The Fang Sword, even if second-hand, would usually be kept by the head branch but this one was an extremely used one so it was sent here."

"Nice, right at the time when I could rise up to rank 4, I got this. This must be destiny."(jouto)

The shopkeeper continued his 'sales talk' as Jouto seemed to be captivated by the sword.

“Since it has the effect of ‘eating’ magical energy, it doesn’t have any effects like Hardening, Lightening, or Sharpening-like enhancement magic but the raw materials used are top class! Even without such magic, its hardness is great and is light yet sharp which is incomparable to a steel sword. On top of it, since it absorbs magical energy, it regenerates and fixes itself even if it gets slightly chipped. As expected of a blade made from a rank 5 Chaos Eater, its performance is incredible!”

“Yeah, I can swing this easily with just this much weight. It’s size is a bit of a problem but if it’s me, I’ll soon get used to it!”(Jouto)

“Yes, I’m sure of it!”

The man agreed and satisfied, Jouto asked him.

“What happened to its previous master? You should know if you appraised it right?”(Jouto)

“Yes, of course. It was a Werewolf man and he was quite the veteran as well it seems.”

So it really is Vulcan’s sword.

But why is this sword here? It should be at the highway—Oh I see, it must have been recovered by the Spada army and must have been sold to this weapon company.

The weapons of strong adventurers are more valuable than precious gems sometimes, they wouldn’t leave it there like that.

But, I could only feel vexed seeing Vulcan’s sword being sold off like this in front of me.

“Heh, to have fallen even with such a sword, he must not have been that amazing.”(Jouto)

No matter what the reason, this is a fair trade. It’s being sold to a fucking irritating werecat but I decided to stay quiet.

But, it’s becoming even more irritating now that he’s insulting my comrade.

After some hesitation, I decided to say something but,

“C’mon, Jouto hurry up!”

“Oh, sorry, I’ll be there in a sec!”

After hearing the voice of a female party member, Jouto returned the sword to the man and turned.

“Prepare a sheath for it. I’ll come back later and pay it lump-sum with gold.”(jouto)

As the shopkeeper thanked him from behind, Jouto quickly left.

It might have been good that it ended without me causing any trouble but my feelings haven’t settled down yet properly.

“I’m sorry, I made you wait.”

With a smile that didn’t seem very sorry, the man returned to me.

He must have been happy after selling a high quality item.

“So, I believe I asked you to show me cursed weapons.”(kurono)

I wasn’t feeling really good right now so my words might have been a bit prickly.

“haa, I can’t really recommend cursed weapons. I can’t bring them out unless they’re reliable like the adventurer that just came. Also, even if a cursed weapon is sold at lower cost, 100,000 still son’t be enough.”

“Then, how much will it cost?”

“1 million at least.”

I see.

When I bought the [Basilisk’s Bone (needle)] it didn’t even cost half of that amount but I guess in a big store like this, storage risk would be low so the incentive of getting it out of their hands as fast as possible won’t work here either.

Or maybe, the items might be simply that good.

But nevertheless, I don’t have a million klan on me right now so I won’t be able to buy——no, wait, even if I don’t have money I do have something worth millions.

“Do you purchase weapons here as well?”(kuroono)

“Yes we do, you have something to sell?”

As he agreed, I brought out a silver shining sword from within my shadow underneath me, it was the divine [Mithril Sword].

“I’ll get a million for this right?”(kuroono)

“Wha—-“

The man’s eyes widened with surprise and he looked between the sword and my face repeatedly.

He thought I was a gofer and an apprentice magician so it must be too much for him to think that I would be possessing such a high quality item. Considering the cost, I couldn’t have normally bought that.

Well, it’s a fact that I did technically steal it.

“So? If you can prepare money to buy this, you can show me your cursed weapons as well right?”(kuroono)

“Ah, no, but, appraisal also has.....”

Maybe he really didn’t want to show an apprentice cursed weapons, the man seemed to be at a loss.

No, if he’s still hesitating now, it might be better to simply rake up some money and raise my rank to buy the weapons but,

“Are you interested in Cursed Weapons, Apprentice Magician-kun?”

Once again, a third voice came in between.

Who is this time? Thinking that, I turned and

“.....!?!”

A giant death god was standing there.

But soon I remembered Mossan, and figured out that this man, with a body even bigger than me, must be of the skeleton race.

Death god, is what I said but only his black robe fit that image. His whole body was thickly covered with golden ornaments and he had a long staff with multi coloured precious gems inlaid in it that gave off a rainbow-coloured light. That image was truly that of a [Lich].

His nouveau riche king-like overdressed up figure really fit the high ranked undead class, Lich.

In his empty eye sockets, purple flames shined as a proof of his magical existence.

Although I was surprised by him, I didn't get overwhelmed and looked towards this skeleton's face.

For the time being, I decided to ask him who he was but,

"Mo, President Mordred!! Why have you come here!?"

The man revealed his identity already.

I see, so this man is the top position of this company.

Well then, why does such an amazing person have something to do with me who is nothing but an apprentice magician?.....

Author's note – The Spada army didn't just loot their items etc. they also gave the dead ones a proper burial as well. (T/N: figured I should Tl this as well since it was slightly relevant.)

Chapter 170 – Mordred Weapon Company (2)

(POV third person)

「How about it, I can exchange that normal 『Mithril Sword』 with a cursed 『Mithril Sword』 ?」

Hurriedly completing the self-introduction, Vein Wortz Mordred, the owner of Mordred Weapon Company said as such.

On hearing the offer, without being delighted by it, he directed a puzzled glance to the big-sized skeleton.

「Why that deal for a rank 1 adventurer like me?」

Kurono stood in a position with no gaps absolutely impossible for a rank 1 adventurer, but Mordred calmly answered while wavering the purple flame in his eye socket.

「It's alright don't be so vigilant, it's only like a hobby for me. I like cursed weapons, I'm somewhat famous as a collector in the neighbourhood, however, I like a person who can use those cursed weapons even more」

「That's why you give them to those who are searching for it, huh」

But yeah it won't be all for free, saying a business-like line, Mordred confirms.

「Can you show them to me?」

Of course I will, along with that answer, the shadow below Mordred expands and is dyed into a color of darkness from abyss of hell.

And like the lady of the lake, a single silver sword with the hilt above rose to surface.

Though Kurono got surprised seeing the same magic Dimension as him in front of him, but he directed his attention to the Cursed 『Mithril Sword』 without showing any hint of surprise on his face.

It's length was the same as Cyprus's sword, but with ornaments at many places affixed into it, just like a decorative ritual sword.

Couple with the silver lustre of Mithril, one swings from it seems like divine.

「You want to use Cursed Weapons, right? Try taking it in hands」

On the provocative words of Mordred,

「That's right」

Kurono decided to ride on the flow.

In the first place one won't understand a cursed weapon without taking it in hands, not always they release the ominous atmosphere like the Cursed Hatchet.

Across the sides of Cursed 『Mithril Sword』 both of their eyesights intersected, in a moment of silence it felt like the domination feeling has risen.

And without losing his way, he reached out his hand to the hilt of silver shining sword.

「.....Hm」

The moment he grabbed the sword, a painful and resentful voice resounded in Kurono's mind.

Kurono has experienced that phenomenon many times, now, it's neither strange nor fearful to him.

At the very least, to scare Kurono, it would need to have the double resentment 『Cursed Grudge hatchet 「HaraRetsu」 』 has.

Upon holding, the voice of this sword is really weak that it can't be compared with the hatchet.

Kurono swings the sword two-three times at that place, and returns it back expressionless to Mordred.

「Fabulous! You have a strong heart to control the cursed weapons」

To the not insane Kurono, Mordred raised a joyful voice.

Even without swinging the sword madly, there are some patterns for knowing the person being possessed by curse, in the case of grudge curses, the most popular pattern is to not let go of the weapon.

At the point Kurono returned back the sword to Mordred is the most definite proof that he didn't get possessed by curse.

「I had been searching for talented person like you, I seriously want you to use this sword!」

「In exchange with this, huh?」

Kurono takes a glance at Cyprus's sword put at counter with cold eyes.

「It might not be something you need to worry, right. If you just conquer the curse of weapon, then you can easily use the powerful ability of weapon afterwards. Incidentally it doesn't have any showy effect, but compared to a normal 『Mithril Sword』 the hardness, weight, durability and other fundamental abilities are far surpassing, of course, it has double power to ward off darkness. That's why don't use it against me, an undead, alright?」
HaHaHa, as though getting lured by the laughing Mordred,

「Ku, Hahahahahaha!」

Kurono too started laughing.

And with a truly strange expression, said as such.

「Haha, in this short 17 years of life this is the first time I have been in a 'scam', I got a good experience from it, thank you」

Saying that Kurono took the sword on counter in his hands, and turns his heel back to leave.

「Wait」

Really heavy, a voice sounding like that of a Grim reaper reached Kurono's back.

「Saying something like scam to me, I don't think it's good to kick my good intention one-sidedly」

「Good Intention? So in Spada the intention to give a newbie adventurer wanting cursed weapon, something like a forgery is called as good intentions, huh?」

Looking back, Kurono sprayed light on Mordred's scam deed.

「Hearing that 'voice', most would believe it to be cursed weapon. I can easily understand that, that weak shit doesn't even compare to a real curse, but if a self-conscious idiot would hold it, he/she would easily accept that it's a cursed weapon. Now for the touches, if you add shit like talent and whatnot, of course he/she would come biting at your bait without even doubting, on this Mithril 'Plated' fake sword」

It looks like a real 『Mithril Sword』 but, the reason he could know that it was plating wasn't because he ripped it's surface off.

Thinking it was a cursed weapon, the moment Kurono tried to use blackening for conquering the grudge of weapon, he didn't feel the

speciality of Mithril, the powerful resilient force which he did during the time he tried to conquer Cyprus's sword.

Of course, the moment he heard the snicker and resentful complaints completely different from the hatchet, it was more than enough proof for it to be proved as a fake.

Most probably, it isn't a true curse, but a magic trick rather than curse to let the wielder hear the voice for deceiving.

「Fufu.....Fuahahaha! You, are a collector of real cursed weapons even with that appearance!」

「No, I'm not a collector」

「I did a rude thing to person with same hobby as me, sorry, let me apologize」

To the unapologetic and haughty attitude of Mordred, Kurono passed over the anger and showed a fed up expression.

「Is it alright that a famous big weapon dealer like you, should be doing something like scamming?」

「It's the work of an adult, no, a collector, to scold a youngster like you who is underestimating cursed weapons」

Mordred didn't show any room for repentance of his actions, but it did show his love and affection for cursed weapons.

But still Kurono still thought it wasn't good to be doing scam.

「You're Kurono, right, all right, as per your wishes, let me show you the cursed weapons in our company's possession」

「No, It's alright」

「Though this is not the main office, but here too are many good weapons, choose at your own discretion! But you won't even get 1 klan of discount though, Fuhahahahahahaha!!」

Mordred showed a menacing ignoring skill, no, most big dealers might have this much vitality, maybe.

「.....Well, if it's just looking」

It would let him complete his work at first, though it would be annoying, but Kurono let himself drift with the flow.

Chapter 171 – Lover Rendezvous in Moonlit Night

By the time I returned to the inn, the sky had already started to be dyed red. After arranging all the minimum necessary equipments and items, we three reached back while talking to eat the dinner at some shop, but in the end we ate the dinner in the dining hall of 『Cat's Tail』 where the quality of food is 60 points and quantity is 100 points.

I come in front of the guest room, open the thin door and enter alone. From the time we started staying here I slept together with Lily, but from yesterday she had been sleeping in the next room to mine, Fiona's room. The rooms are both same, but it might be different with different sleeping partner, well I had been with Lily always so it's a little lonely for me, but I have no right to complain so I'm letting Lily do as she wants.

「Either way, I'm tired」

I throw off the glittering black robe with a symbol of First-year Student embedded into it, and immediately sit on the bed.

The time I wore 『Baphomet's Embrace』, unexpectedly I had never thought to remove it other than the time I slept, but that ain't happening with this fake look-alike robe.

It needs to be taken off during the time I want to relax.

It's better to put it away before it gets creases, thinking that I throw it inside the 『Shadow Gate』 which had it's belly full unlike the morning.

After all I filled it with 15 long swords, while having the spare energy of 5 extra swords, I can now use Sword Arts.

Incidentally the extra 5 swords were given as a service to make up for the same he pulled off.

I don't know if the solatium for the crime of fraud is really worth 50K Klan or not, but I had no intention to complain about it and stiked the deal.

Well though it went fine this time, but like hell I would go to shop like that another time! Oh, I'm not that much angry, when I get more money collected, I'm thinking of going to buy a cursed weapon for sure. [ET: hell he's being contradictory, but yeah it's not that I don't like it]

Speaking of cursed weapon, eventually, I didn't buy it.

Selling the 『Mithril Sword』 would've gotten me the money to buy two cursed weapons, but thinking of fighting against monsters with darkness attribute or black magic, I rethink and stopped myself.

Due to Mithril's nature, upon covering it with black magical power it gets purified in some time so it's got the disadvantage of not being used in Sword Arts, but there is no objection is swinging it normally.

All the other cursed weapons I saw were all very fascinating, my heart wavered, but I decided to bear that pain.

Above all, it was annoying to get carried on with that lich skeleton's sales talk.

Well then, It was at the time I thought to check the articles I had brought.

「Hm, letter?」

I noticed the existence of a paper folded four times, placed near the pillow. What if, it is another message from Simon? Guessing that I opened the letter,

I will be waiting in the plaza tonight.

And only that small sentence was written there.

「Who is it.....」

Anxiety swirled inside my heart, it's natural, getting an anonymous letter anyone would feel anxiety.

Just if I had got this in my high school days, I would've been in high spirits thinking on the possibilities of it being love letter, unfortunately in this situation something that good, I can't expect.

From the people I know who would send a letter to me would be.....Apostles? From 8th Apostle Ai's foolish personality, I completely like hell don't know think it's written by her written, she would appear almost anywhere while being a normal adventurer.

But, in that case the possibility of naming herself beforehand is high, right?
If they want to see my shivering and pitiful state, telling their identity as apostles would have better effect, no doubt.

If it's not Apostle, then the next would be, self-proclaimed god Mia, huh.

No, this side would too will gave name first.

If so, is here another god wanting to bless me with a new divine protection?

If you're another damn god, then appear in dreams and do some oracle or crap.

My thoughts swirl while running around in circles, in this situation with no leads, I can't possibly find the name of sender.

However, ignoring this letter would leave a bad taste, on the contrary it really piques my interest.

I won't go, is a choice I won't take.

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. .

「Alright, ready to go」

I put on the robe which was thought to be left alone in the shadow gate today, and step out in the Spada ruled by darkness.

I had already discussed about the letter with Lily and Fiona during the dinner.

「Well then, Lily-san and I will hide in the plaza beforehand, if it feels like dangerous situation, I would release the 『Aur Soleil』 , please rest assured」

That offer which seemed like a scheme to kill me, only had its first part usable.

「At least keep it to 『Ignis Kris Sagita』 」

I have given a warning, it would be fine.

I don't have 『Baphomet's Embrace』, also have returned 『Nana Blast Amulet』 back to Fiona, so I don't have any particular defensive power on me right now.

But well unless an apostle does appear I can get past it, thinking that I walk the street in the dark.

『Cat's Tail』 is facing a quite wide road, due to that it can gain the benefit of having the street light, so the road is somewhat bright.

In the first place, today is full moon night, even without the street lights the darkness can be made less.

Maybe it's their return time to inn, I can see some adventurer-esque drunkards.

Seems like only I'm heading towards the plaza, the people who sometimes come across are all passing beside me.

As the plaza is in different location from pleasure quarters, finally the human presence are all gone, only the sound of me kicking the stone pavement can be heard.

Now then, who might be waiting for me, my anticipation rise exponentially wanting to know the answer.

From the contents, the place to meet is most probably the plaza with the obelisk.

Starting from central plaza, there are other places that can be called the plaza but it wasn't stated particularly, so I couldn't think of any other than this.

Incidentally the word 'tonight' is a quite vague designated time, it hasn't been much after the moon soared up in the cloudless starry night sky.

Therefore, I wouldn't have made the other person wait long that they went back.

Of course, using this sort of way to call me means, that they have the willpower to wait till dawn.

「Good, just after this, huh」

I walk in high spirits from the entrance of the now deadly quiet plaza which was lively with people in the noon.

It isn't that big, upon entering the 『Beginning of History (Zero Chronicle)』, enshrined in the centre can be seen.

Apparently, there isn't any sign of people in front of the obelisk of more than 10 m size including the pedestal.

「What, no one is here.....」

My head cools down rapidly.

Yes, I had completely thrown the choice of this being a prank into oblivion, that's right, that is the most possible pattern.

While feeling sad and regret for making Lily and Fiona do some labour, I hold on the faint hope of the sender appearing, and move towards the obelisk for waiting some time.

And, when I reached the jet-black wall which is completely immersed in the darkness of night,

「You really did come, Thanks」

That voice came from behind the obelisk.

It is, the sender was already here from before.

I, in a hurry run towards the opposite side of obelisk while feeling half surprised and half vigilance.

Now then, the person waiting for me there was,

「.....Lily」

「I'm sorry, for calling you in this way」

My most intimate and trusted partner in this world, Lily, she was standing there in her true form, the young girl form.

I see, today is full moon night, that's why she can remain in her true form without using divine protection neither 『Queen Beryl』

But more that, more mysterious thing is,

「Why did you do something like this?」

That's right, even without sending out an anonymous letter, she can talk to me no matter how much she wants.

If it was something private that she didn't want Fiona to listen, then it could've happened somehow or other.

「.....I'm, sorry」

Lily, dropped her head down with the most sad expression I have seen and spoke the words of apology.

「No, I'm not angry, for Lily to do something like this means there is a reason for it, can I hear it」

Lily always looks pure and innocent even in her little girl form, but that form too has a skill, that is 'to read the atmosphere'.

That's why she won't spring out selfish desires and play pranks as a child, and neither tries to do them.

She has 32 years old equivalent, no not that much, but yeah somewhere along those lines of thinking power and judging power, for her to do this means she has a reason.

Even now I can't find what it is, that's why I'm asking her.

Just what, did happened to her?

「Thank you, Kurono, for caring about me」

「It's natural, what happened, tell me」

Though I didn't speak, Lily can understand my heart, that's why my feelings were transmitted to her.

And, Lily replied quietly.

「I was scared.....when Kurono told me to leave. Kurono didn't want to be by my side, I thought you would go somewhere leaving me alone, in the end, I could only see you going off without having words to stop you.....」

No way, I did think that she would've been worried, but to this extent is somewhat.

「That's why, when you came back during night in high spirits, I was really happy. But, even so I, the adult me, couldn't find courage to call out to you. It would've been better if I remained as the child me and would have lived happily like today, but that's not good, upon becoming adult, I can't help but think about the bad and scary things——」

Now that I think about it, Lily didn't change her consciousness from yesterday till today even once.

From the day she got 『Queen Beryl』, Lily has been conversating, consulting, and chatting with me for some hours everyday.

She must have changed her consciousness on an event like shopping, but, I didn't realize that she didn't.

Without knowing what Lily had hidden in the deepest part of her heart.

「I'm sorry, if I didn't do something like this, the current me wouldn't have been able to meet you, Kurono. I couldn't come, so I asked you come to me, I'm sorry, this is only my selfishness」

「No, I should be the one apologizing, after all because if me you got worried so much. I on my own will got depressed and cheered up, I only thought about myself without understanding about Lily at all.」

Certainly, that defeat, that rejection of me, had enough shock to break my heart into tiny fragments.

But, Lily always was beside my side, she worried about me, cared about me. That's why, don't be depressed, get yourself together and don't let Lily make that sorrowful face.

「Nope, I'm the one wrong, I got scared on my own——but,」
There Lily cut off her words, kicking the ground with her feet, she jumped right into my chest.

With full moon as the background, the figure of her coming at me while her wings leaves a trace of rainbow color in air, was without a doubt fairytale-like.

I accept the body of Lily, which was small and delicate in this form too while being fascinated.

「Fufu, if you think you're wrong, then can you listen to one of my selfish wishes」

Then, Lily reveals a mischievous smile she rarely shows, and looks at me with her alluring gaze.

I can't possibly refuse, if you look at me with those eyes.

「What is it?」

If I can close the gap created between us while I was being oblivious with just one wish, then shouldn't I take responsibility here and do it.

Lily increased her smile, and answered.

「Kiss me」

Saying that, she looked away and showed her white soft cheeks to me.

「Ah, I wasn't able to do it during the festival last time, right」

「Yeah, That's why this time without fail, okay?」

That time, if I had made decision even a second before, I would've kissed her adult form.

However, I don't have to worry about losing the chance to kiss her, after all the moon's going to be up until dawn. More than anything, this time I won't hesitate.

「Lily——」

It seems like before I knew it, I now cared about Lily as a little sister, care about her as my important family.

Surely, Lily who lived alone till now would be feeling the same.

Though we're not blood-related, but she would be thinking as me as her family. [ET: Dude, you're off the mark by hundred miles, no, adding her Yandere side, you're off the mark by 1000 miles.]

That's why, this time I kiss her cheeks with deep familial emotions.

Chapter 172 – Subjugation Quest x5

「It seems you were enjoying a lot last night」

Next morning, I was sitting in front of Fiona's glare with reproachful eyes in the dining hall of 『Cat's Tail』 .

「No, well.....Sorry」

Only the words of pathetic apology comes out.

I turn my sight to Lily for some support in the same crime,

「Nh~, Uu~」

But, she is dozing off while shaking her head slightly, she's still not out of her dream world, it seems.

「Leaving me alone, you played in the dead of night.....leaving me alone.....kicking me out」

「That's why sorry! I apologize! I got carried by the flow and played at night with Lily!!」

Having said that, frankly I completely forgot the existence of the girl named Fiona.

Last evening, after meeting with Lily in front of plaza, I plunged into playing in night, after all it was full moon night.

The big city of Spada is really great, the pleasure quarters have a really large scale, there are even bars where men and women can drink the night away.

Of course, there were also indecent shops which are essential parts of night city, but I didn't step in the realm of R-18 yet.

With this and that, along with young girl Lily we ate and drank food and wine, and just like the time in the small hut somewhat 1 month ago, we both have fun while spending the time calmly.

Yes, by leaving this party member, Fiona out.

「While you two were making merry in nightlife, I was peacefully sleeping like a child in the bed, truly deplorable」

In truth Fiona knew the sender of letter was Lily, and she even cooperated while keeping quiet.

That's why knowing there is no mysterious enemy, she didn't complete her mission to keep guard in the plaza, and only saw off Lily then stayed at the inn.

「I will truly invite you next time, no, I will let you eat as much as you want, it's all up to me, is that fine?」

「.....Weren't you going to complete the quests today?」

「Hm, in that case let's change it to some other day——」

「No, postpone the quests for tomorrow, something like that can be done anytime」

What, you said that and now you're going back on it?!

Well it's fine, Lily seems like she lacks sleep, and there is still time for the time limit of quests, there is no problem to complete them tomorrow.

The real problem is,

「Kurono-san, let's exhaust every food in Spada today」

Whether my purse will go bankrupt or not..... [ET: Learn something from Gintoki!]

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. .

Further next day, on the 16th of Hatsuhi Month, I am standing in front of dining hall of inn——not that, but in front of the open main gates of Spada. Naturally, to complete the quests.

Yesterday, in between the gourmet tour in Sapda of the gluttonous witch Fiona, we stopped by the guild and registered 『Element Master』 officially. The preparations to go out are all done, I want to go out and complete them just really soon, I can't help but be impatient get the reward, due to the light feeling I'm getting from my purse.

「All right, well then let's go」

「O—」

「Uu—」

Leaving aside Fiona's languidness, Lily is not in high spirits, no she's in a really bad mood.

「What happened Lily?」

「.....Nothing in particular」

The fairy clings at my leg, completely revealing that she has something going on.

No good, I don't understand a thing unless she tells me herself.

「Aren't you sad, that we three will have to go separately?」

But, there was an unexpected person, who unexpectedly answered correctly.

It is Fiona the girl with the reputation of not even trying to read the atmosphere, no, it's not like I'm dissing her because I want to retaliate to her for emptying my wallet.

「Is that true, Lily?」

「Hm—, Yeah, it would be better to go together」

She said such a thing in a lovely way which wavered my heart strings,

「Sorry, we would go on quests as a party later」

But I can't listen to her selfish desires this time.

Were heading to complete the quests, but there are 5 quests to be completed at once, quite troublesome to do together.

All the quests can be completed even bare-handedly, but because the habitat of monsters differ, it's better to go solo rather than going one by one in a party, and it would even finish overwhelmingly faster.

I don't know how much time remains before Crusaders attack here, so I don't want to waste any more time here.

「Yeah, I will work hard!」

「I see, I will look forward to it, Lily!」

Lily still understands the situation clearly, she really is good child.

「Then this is the quest document for Lily」

I give the quest document to Lily with a feeling of giving a child the shopping memo who is going out for errands first time.

Incidentally, the contents are,

Quest: Subjugate Slime

Reward: 10000 klan

Time Limit: 1 month from the agreement of quest

Client: Adventurer Guild

Request Contents: Subjugate 5 slimes. On the subjugation of more than required the reward will be increased.

Written in a quite blunt business-like way.

The slime subjugation quests are always being offered as quests for guaranteeing the security of people living in area, quests like this are not exclusively put up by other people.

Even the army sometimes goes on quests like this, but due to the monster's marvellous reproductive abilities it's far away from extinction, therefore by taking the help of adventurers too, they can keep the monsters away from human habitations.

By the way, all the quests taken this time are of this type.

Quests like these can be taken by any adventurers, furthermore they're even suitable for the conditions required for upgrading the rank.

「It seems like there is an increase in slimes population within The Great Forest of Latifundia, that's why Lily is going there」

We three enclose the rough map of Spada outskirts, and once again confirm its geography.

Great Forest of Latifundia expands in the northwest of Spada, just like it's name it is a really big forest.

Inside it's deepest part is the dungeon area, it seems even in the shallow areas rank 2 monsters are loitering around, compared to Fairy Garden, a similar dungeon forest, this one's rank is incomparably above.

Though it's like that, with Lily's strength, the shallows areas with rank 2 difficulty level is not even considered as a risk.

「You can come back after completing the goal, we both might be late, so try to subjugate for the whole day with the intention of getting additional rewards」

「Yeah, I will defeat many slimes!」

Like that, Lily is now in charge of slime subjugation quest.

It's not like I'm giving favorable treatment, simply there is nothing else than slime subjugation we can achieve in Latifundia forest.

The monsters for other 4, are all living in the northern part and southern part of Galahad Mountain Range.

「I will leave the Vindol and Dagger Raptor in the southern part to you, Fiona」

「Yes, I will take care of it」

Here too is the same as Lily's reward, time limit, and number of monsters to defeat.

Aside from their individual strengths, for example dagger raptor has high individual power whereas the slimes attack in numbers, so defeating 5 in both doesn't has much difference.

Of course, upon proceeding, defeating the monster with low individual power is more easy.

「I will take care of Goblins and Punpun in northern part」

「Punpun?」

「Pun?」 [ET: This is both the japanese Pun of monster's name and english pun. XD]

I think I had been doing the a serious talk here, but with the pronunciation of this name of 『Punpun』 monster,

「Kurono-san, is this another world high-grade joke?」

They are now thinking I'm screwing around.

or rather what the hell is this another world joke, of course to you me being from Japan is me being another world inhabitant, but I don't have any strange sense of humour.

For clearing the misunderstanding, I explain about this Punpun.

「On the quest document it's written as Bear-Rabbit, but it's read as Punpun」

「I see, there are many strange monsters in Pandora」

Though, the name is the only thing that's strange.

I have completed the investigation on this Bear-Rabbit, correction Punpun in the Monster List, from what I read it's not much different from other monsters living a mediocre life.

「Pu—n, pun?」

That's right, only the name is strange.

「Anyway! After clearing them, we all are rank 2, let's complete them quickly and aim for the top!」

Oou! This time surely I got a good cheerful reply.

「Well then, good luck everyone, Dismissed!」

Then, we three start walking separately, towards our own battlegrounds.



Chapter 173 – The Fluffy Army Threat! Bear-Rabbit Punpun!!

After being shaken by the dragon carriage from Spada via Dacia to Avalon, I finally reach the starting point of the northern Galahad mountains, the Village of Dacia.

Incidentally the dragon carriages are, the dragon-sized version of horse-pulled carriages, but the puller is a dragon here.

Though it's a dragon but it's herbivorous, its speed is not to that of horse, but still it traversed the road while kicking rapidly on ground with its thick legs.

This land dragon which is pulling this large cube-shaped carriage, has incomparable power to that of horse, and it's body is like that of an elephant, short and stout.

When I first saw it seemed like a bus to me.

「Well then, I need to work fast」

I landed on the bus stop, and just like that started heading towards the Galahad Mountains.

The time is afternoon, if I enter the mountains from now on it would become evening.

Normally it would be NG for entering the mountains at this time, but thanks to my uselessly tough body I can keep on walking without sleep or food.

It might take more than 3 days for me to remain in the mountain, so I'm not willing to waste my half day of the first day by sleeping.

I start walking in completely opposite direction from the Guild of Dacia, where many other adventure-esque people are going.

If I complete my quota of 5 bodies of Punpun and Goblin, I would be able to wrap this up by today only.

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Near my feet, a light-blue colored skin lizard is lying down with its head cut off.

It's size more that of a crocodile rather than a lizard, and its silhouette is like that of a newt, having suction pads rather claws in front of its legs. This monster called as Minatokage, a rank 1 monster, inhabits the waterside I'm currently at, and just like their appearance they control water attribute of magic.

The water itself can deal no damage even if it comes falling at you, unless it's got a water pressure of a water cutter or a laser, it won't become any threat as an attack magic.

Of course, Minatokage who have been classified as rank 1, have no way to fire a water pistol that can pierce through iron plate too.

The only nasty part in this monster is, the fact there is corrosive venom mixed in the water currents and water that come out of its mouth.

It has no power to corrode a chain upon touching, but the thing that would get acute damage from its touch is not the body but weapon.

Though it's the low concentrated corrosive liquid, it would easily make a low-grade weapon's iron blade into a dull blade.

Due to this, even a good high-grade article would get damage, and is like a monster that makes low ranked adventurers cry for buying new weapons. By the way, it's all from the monster list.

「It seems like even my hatchet would be fine taking this much」

I judge it upon touching the corrosive liquid mixture sticking to the now severed head like drool with my finger.

Before it could launch its water pistol or anything, the match got over with my one attack from 『Cursed Grudge Hatchet 「HaraRetsu」 』, in the end the blade itself has no contact with the liquid.

But, it's better to know its power, right.

A high-grade weapon can take on some venomous attacks, so there is no problem in using this Cursed Hatchet.

Or rather, the blade can restore upon drinking blood so even if it gets somewhat worn-out there isn't any big problem.

8th Apostle Ai had opened a great hole in the dead centre, but I took it out today only to find it in wonderful healthy condition.

「Well, let's tear the materials」

The proof of Minatokage subjugation is the most biggest crystal like thorn on its back.

The scales and the organ for refining the corrosive liquid can also be taken out and sold as monster materials, but the current me has neither time nor the skill to do that.

The difference in the class and experience as adventurer get's out here, eh, thinking that I take out the thorn while making crisping sounds.

This Minatokage is the first monster that I have met after getting lost in the mountains while searching for traces of monsters.

It showed hostility and got defeated, but it's not a target for subjugation.

I thought to once again search for Goblins and Punpun while tearing off the thorns,

「Looks like I don't need to do more labour」

But I'm glared at with hostility filled eyes, they got lured in the till here by the smell of the lizard, it seems.

By straining my ears I can hear the heavy breathing and ferocious groaning sounds too.

I can tell that many other presences are in my surrounding to enclose me.

No doubt, I've got no choice of running back here, they themselves came here, shouldn't I welcome them gently.

Right hand equipped with 『Cursed Grudge Hatchet 「HaraRetsu」 』 , charging Bullet Arts completed, preparations all completed.

「Come out, I will play with you all」

And as if answering my words,

SFX: Gaooo——oon!!

Various black shadows jumped out in the riverside I stand while bellowing.

「So this is, Punpun.....」

Seeing it's figure, I can only consent the name to be written as Bear-Rabbit.

It is of a kind of dark brown hair color, there are white fur growing on it's stomach, hands and legs, in particular the coloring on its base of throat is closely resembling the Asian black bear.

It has big red eyes, and rabbit like ears protruding.

Having the appearance of both Bear and Rabbit, this is without a doubt a Punpun.

But, I'm not worried about that,

「It feels like cosplay costume, what if there are humans inside it?」

But it's the body and head which is deformed in truth.

There are 4 of them, all four with strangely too big head, moreover it's hair seems to be as soft as that of hair that is tuck on teddy bears.

They are walking on two legs, and are waving their thick arms for appealing the strength, but it kinda looks like they're drumming.

Let it be it's appearance or it's pronunciation, this Punpun name does has a comical sense hidden inside.

I feel a little sense of guilt while subjugating it.

SFX: Gooooaaa—!

But, being ungrateful to my feelings, they try to intimidate me with their appearance as though I broke their hibernation sleep.

Each time a voice resounds, more and more Punpun start coming to the riverfront.

2, 3, 4, hey just how many of these cosplay costumes are here, huh!?

While I think that, finally a different one appears with the height of 3 metres and has it's head bigger than other Puns.

From the scar on its one eye and the intimidation in air, it's easy to guess this one is the boss of this crowd.

Gao—n!

When that Boss Pun cries out in a conspicuously loud voice, the other Puns surrounding me start moving at once.

「Bullet Arts Full Burst」

This time, without hesitating neither panicking I release the load of bullets.

I don't have 『Black Ballista Replica』 so the power is 1 level lower, yet more than enough to kill a rank 1 monster.

All the Punnuns attacking me from all sides meet with the storm of bullets without exception.

Thanks to the fluffy fur it has a more physical defense than compared to Goblins, but it can't stop my Bullet Arts.

OooOo—nn!

The Punpun who came attacking in high spirits, took the bullets head-on, and are falling down in high spirits too.

At this point 3 are dead, the rest 4 are still injured.

There are still 6 Puns or more remaining in the surrounding, but the Boss Pun raises his voice, and the 4 injured ones too leap to the back.

At the same time, Boss Pun picks up the stone lying on the riverfront, no it's a boulder you can say from its size.

「You going to try stone throwing!？」

It takes an excellent pitching form and throws the boulder at 200 kmph in a straight line.

I evade it immediately by jumping to the side.

Upon landing, the place I was standing before is the only the ruins of boulder.

But more than the sound of explosion, I am more surprised seeing two Punpun carrying the corpse of decapitated lizard and running away.

These are horribly familiar actions.

SFX: KaoooOOO—NN!!

The Boss Pun raises his bellow, on the contrary to their entrance, this time more than 10 Punpun start plotting for escape.

「I'm sorry, but I would take 2 more of you all」

I can't let them escape like this.

There are only 3 dead on the riverfront, there are still 2 less to complete the quota.

While feeling the guilt that I never felt in killing the Crusaders, I throw the Sword Arts towards the Punpun jumping inside the forest.

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Before I knew it, the sun had already set down.

I throw the corpses of 5 Punpun just like that into 『Shadow Gate』 .

The demand for Punpun meat and fur is more, therefore the price of its materials too is high.

But here treats it as only either bear or rabbit, while thinking, I put the proof of subjugation right rabbit-ear into another slot.

「However, they were more formidable enemies than Goblins」

I subjugated them the day I met Lily, but no matter how much sword arts (It was Gatling that time) I used, they just kept on coming like idiots.

However that Boss Pun looking at my first attack judged me not as an enemy and ordered the retreat.

And they even shrewdly took back the lizard, impressive.

I can't help but think that they have more intelligence than Goblins in contrary to their appearances.

If they use items too, no doubt they would become rank 2 monsters.

「There are various types within monsters, eh」

Once again thinking that, I walk in the dark and silent mountain road of Galahad Mountains to search and kill my next target, Goblin.

Chapter 174 – Rushing Slime Fever!?

「Damn it! Don't fuck with me!!」

Rank 2 adventurer Zach, has a skinhead and muscular body appearance and so is the battle axe he is swinging to bring down the attacking slimes, while swinging, he shouts the words of abuse to the comrade who showed its back and ran away leaving him behind.

But, with those words the comrade won't come back, no, (s)he won't come back no matter what words he spoke.

After all though slime is a rank 1 monster, but with a very big crowd of them attacking is something those people who just reached Rank 2 cannot defeat.

Hence escaping, the comrade 1, left Zach behind and ran away.

「Shit shit, don't follow me damn it!」

Thinking back, it was since 13th of Hatsuhi Month that his luck start going down, Zach recalls.

That day, he along with outcasts from the slums he was loitering around, lived a corrupted life extorting money.

But during the evening of 13th, he discovered a girl carrying 10,000 klan that should be beyond her reach, at that time he thought he got a good find, he was so happy that he even gave the words of appreciation to the Black Gods.

Like that, he was able to corner the girl in a blind alley.

Zach confirmed that he would get unexpected perk at that point, and his heart started beating faster thinking he would spend all the money in the night city.

He didn't think of even assaulting the girl, something like that, only someone who is high due to alcohol or drugs would do or only someone broken from nature would do that.

After all, if they made noises in the back alleys of slums, then those broken bastards would come up like hyenas.

In the worst case, those guys would take the money he swindled, even if that didn't occur it's obvious that something really troublesome would

occur, he didn't mind hiding his lewd intentions so as to not lose the ten thousand klan.

In the first place, rather than the small girl, it's more better for spending the night with professionals.

Anyway, though he had desire swirling inside his heart, he didn't lay a hand on girl and just took the bag with money.

Then,

「Oi, what are you doing there」

1 single man appeared.

A rank 1 adventurer, with gravely stern eyes, that's how it should have been.

Due to the man, let alone the loss of money, his favorite sub weapon Long sword was broken, the fact he couldn't use magic and martial skills was revealed to his younger brothers, and while returning back home he was bitten by a stray dog, and it became a really troublesome day.

What in particular was bad was, his two younger brothers were grandiosely making it public that Zach is a good for nothing with nothing else than his height.

Zach did well in slums while boasting about his power due to his stern looks, but soon enough the rumours spread, and he was branded as small fry, he also got into troubles with others.

In truth, Zach was an active rank 2 adventurer, without even magic or martial skills, his muscle power was the same as it looked, so when he got into troubles he would handle them himself, but due to rumours, slums became an uncomfortable place for him.

As a result that man said,

「If you can then stop doing this, and try to raise money by working as a genuine adventurer」

He couldn't help but accept those words in this situation, at the very least until the rumours, lose their spread and start to the heat starts to cool down.

Then, he took out the bronze plate Guild Card and Battle Axe with dust on them, and after 1 year he decided to show his face in the guild.

There he took the suitable quest, made a temporary party with suitable people, that's how he came to this Great Forest of Latifundia, a.k.a The Forest of Lati.

And, it all leads to now.

「Pant.....Pant.....Stop fucking with me.....」

It was bad move for him to cut into the group of slimes while doing his job as a vanguard.

The moment Zach stepped one step inside, from the surrounding a light blue colored slime army appeared.

The judgement of temporary members was quite fast while looking at that. They used Zach who was in a bad position as decoy and escaped on their own, it was heartless action but sometimes, to live, things like this can be done.

In the first place, though they were a rank 2 party, but if they were an old party with lot of experiences, then they would choose to escape everyone and there was a possibility that everyone would return alive.

But, in the end it's a temporary party, if it got a little dangerous, they won't hesitate to disband it.

「UGaaaaa!!」

Neither any skills or anything, just a simple swing.

But luckily that one swing hit the core of 2 slimes and dealt a critical damage to them.

「Great!」

Crushing the dying slimes while leaving their blue body behind by the sole of his solid boots, Zach retreats.

He had been completely surrounded, but right behind him the enemies are less, determined on that fact he started to escape.

It was quite foolish plan, but there is no other plan he could do in the current situation.

「You damn slime bastards, don't fucking get in my way, OraaaAAA!!」

Many tentacles made from the slimes body grab his hands and legs.

Though he suffers acute pain from getting his skin melted due to acid, but without stopping his dash, forcefully breaks the thin jelly-like tentacles.

I can do it, It's by a paper's width margin but I can be alive—thinking that, he pushes aside the last slime in the back with the help of axe.

He made it out, affirming that he jumped over the brushwoods in front of him and the thing waiting for him

「Hi, Ah.....H, Help——」

「P, Please.....fast」

「AH, Argh——I can't bear it.....」

Were the three temporary party members who left him,

SFX: KoOOOOO

Getting eaten by a giant slime.

「Giant Slime.....impossible, fuck, why in this place?!」

Giant Slime is a monster of Rank 3 difficulty.

It's just a slime that got big excessively, but due to that it got a power up and is regarded as rank 3.

In the shallow areas of the forest where only rank 2 monsters appears, unless someone has really bad luck they won't meet it.

Ah, I really am unfortunate, Zach thought as such while watching the special digestive process of slime.

「Hahaha.....I'm done for.....」

Even without turning back he could tell, an army of slimes has reached.

In the first place, even without the slime army, he wouldn't be able to fight against the giant slime that easily ate 3 rank 2 adventurers.

「Save.....me.....」

Seeing the whole body of three being dissolved, Zach guessed the next one to be eaten was him.

Maybe the Giant Slime had somewhat tomcat full after eating the three humans, he didn't capture Zach by spreading out its tentacles.

To make up for that, the various slimes from behind do the same work and send out tentacles to Zach's muscular body.

「I'm dead.....I will die.....」

Though he felt many tentacles spread at him, Zach just stood grabbing his battle axe without moving even a bit.

Then finally, the pointed end of tentacles touch his body, his darkish skin starts to melt.

The moment the acute pain from before ran through him,

「Uwwaaaa! Don't do it!! Stop it!!」

With tears, snot, and drool flowing out, Zach tried to rampage as much he could.

「Stop it! Don't come 'ereeeeeeee!!」

While in rampage, he would, with his axe, stop slime attacks and sometimes deal a lethal attack to their cores.

But, the number of slimes he had defeated are somewhere along the lines of 3 or 4.

He can't possibly stop the waves of uncountable number of slimes with just that much of resistance.

「Uwwaaa, Aaaa—」

However, by struggling more the more despair is born.

Maybe the hunger of Giant Slime was stimulated seeing Zach swinging his battle axe, it formed log like tentacles and extended them as to surround Zach's surroundings.

「Ah, AH.....」

Having the giant body of Giant Slime standing in his way, finally he lost his fighting spirit.

He couldn't help but only cry shiver and keep on holding the battle axe, without being able to do a thing.

His mind starts filling with fear of death, without having anything to think, the head went blank white, at that moment, truly white light shined in front of his eyes.

「.....Aa!？」

When he thought that a dazzling flash attacked him, the semi-solid bodies started to fall on his body like a downpour.

「W, What is this!？」

He wiped his face off in a hurry for confirming the situation, opening his eyes there is no sign of the Giant Slime anywhere, instead a light green colored 2 meters large sphere is floating there.

What is this light ball—He immediately understood that it isn't the core of Giant Slime.

That is because he has confirmed the red colored things, core of slimes, scattered everywhere.

Then what would it be, his doubt deepens,

「Uu—!」

Just when the light of sphere fades away, the true identity is revealed.

「What? Why, this brat?」

A single small girl is clad in the sphere of light.

「No.....you, a fairy?」

The blonde hair, green eyes, and more than anything else, the pair of rainbow-colored wings sprouting from her back, frankly explain what she is.

「Ee—ii!!」

But to Zach's question, no, most probably monologue, the fairy didn't answer.

Instead, from the sphere of light cladding her body numerous balls of light are dispatched.

「Uwa!?!」

They become saturated white light and shine the insides of dark forest where the sunlight cannot reach.

Without being able to bear the light Zach closes his eyes, ears to for covering the sounds of explosions occurring around him.

To add up he crouches down being scared of the intense shockwaves and heat waves coming at him time by time.

「Hi, Hiii—! What is it, what the fuck is it! Just what the fucking hell happened this time!?!」

Inside the flood of light and sound, Zach, a human without anything else than high physical power, can only do that.

「I, Is it over.....?」

How much time had passed since the carpet bombing is over.

Zach finally understood that the threat has passed, for confirming he raises up his head,

「Ha, Haha.....I'm saved.....」

Only to find the jelly-like bodies of slime coating the plants and trees.
Inside it, some broken red stone like things are shining with dull light.
The slime army that seemed to like bury everything that came in it's way,
now has turned into corpses army.

「Hahaha.....I'm saved, I'm fuckin' saved!」

That day, Zach for the first gave his heartfelt gratitude to the Black Gods.

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A small girl in black dress is loitering here and there in the dark forest while gathering up something.

If she was picking up flowers in a meadow, even the hoodlum Zach would loosen his cheeks seeing the lovely figure, but the girl was picking up the cores of the now-split apart slimes.

「Just what.....am I doing.....」

With an unknown development, Zach started helping the shining fairy in collecting the cores.

He isn't reluctant to say gratitude to his saviour, but without even talking or even introducing each other, doing something this only fills his heart with anxiety.

But once he started, he didn't stop.

Like that, after most of cores are collected, he gave the bag filled with dull red cores to the fairy.

「Oji-san, Thank you—」

Zach didn't feel anything bad seeing the sunflower like bright smile on the fairy's face.

「No, that, you even saved me there, so thank you」

How time would have passed since he has gave his gratitude from his heart.

「Hm—?」

However, the fairy took the words of gratitude and made a face as though she had no idea what he was talking about.

Zach didn't expect a child like looking fairy to reply to his gratitude, so he didn't worry about it.

「Oji-san, Bye bye」

Then, the fairy opened up the dimension magic as if natural, loaded the two full bags of core, and left while waving her hand.

To be more precise, towards the deepest part of Great Forest of Latifundia, the place declared as a dungeon.

Being dumbfounded, Zach thought the series of events that just happened are all an hallucination.

But, the genocide of slimes spread in surroundings extremely proves that everything is truth.

「Fairies are, awesome, right.....」

He didn't really understand it properly but anyway it's awesome, Zach understood the wideness of the world on this day.



Chapter 175 – Ifrit Appears!?

The sophomore, Eddie, of the Knight course in Royal Spada Academy was strolling in the southern part of Galahad Mountains with his classmates/party members.

「――After that, Erina-san said this to me」

「What did she say?」

「That she would wait for me until I am qualified to get quests from the Guild Headquarters!」

「Don't dramatize it! You were just being decently taken care of!」

「Nuuaaaa, don' speak tat!!」 [ET: The guy spoke in an informal tone]

The party of 4 students were chatting idly as though they were hiking, but during this time last year, they didn't had any composure to even speak a word due to exhaustion by marching in Galahad Mountains.

They were still Rank 1, as an adventurer, no as a knight protecting Spada, but their strength had steadily increased.

「But, after clearing this quest we all will be able to move up to rank 2 finally」

「It's truth we would move one step closer to our admired Miss Erina」

That's right! The members looked at Eddie replying in high tension with lukewarm eyes.

The beautiful Elf receptionist, Erina, who had joined the Guild branch of Academy district, was a famous celebrity known by every students in Knight course who used the guild's facilities.

No, it would be more suitable to say her an idol, she was the one single flower that had bloomed in the guild where only ruffian-like adventurers gathered and talked about bloodthirsty things.

That ever-loved-beautiful Elf girl, kindly and politely smiled and interacted with every person, even the people who were students, with this much there was no way she wouldn't get popular.

That's why, even his friends didn't think that their idiot-high-spirited friends, Eddie, would be able to pass through the multiple rivals and shoot down Miss Erina's heart.

「I will do it, before graduating, I will definitely become a man worthy of getting quests at the Guild Headquarters」

But, if he was going to improve his abilities by burning his young passion, it can be a good thing in itself.

Even if the words 'First Love never bears fruit' becomes a truth with an unchangeable reality with chances of being 100% correct.

「In fact, don't let down your guard Eddie, even if they are dagger raptors, this time there seems to be a quite a big crowd of them」

The staff officer of the Party, a male magician student, warns to his somewhat unreliable leader, Eddie.

「Now that you say it, they sure are increasing recently」

「Be careful so that you don't unintentionally jump in their nest」

Monster's strength information is something that should always be confirmed at the time of taking a quest.

The monsters have been identified based on the area of habitation, but the breeding conditions and turf wars are constantly changing, moment-by-moment.

The information of knowing beforehand about the easy encounter with monsters helps a great deal in preparing, for a typical example, if poison insects monsters are released in large numbers then they would prepare a lot of antidote beforehand.

Hence, the current quest of subjugating 5 dagger raptors has the most danger, in this situation with their breeding expansion, no doubt it would've become large herd, and would be difficult to complete the quest if they attacked at once.

They themselves and others know that they have the ability to already become Rank 2, but still they shouldn't let down their guards.

「——Oi」

At that moment, another knight member walking in the front along with Eddie stopped in his tracks.

Sensing the serious atmosphere coming from him, the other three suddenly take the battle stance.

「What happened?」

「Isn't it smelling awfully burnt?」

Really? He tried to reply back, but a sudden gust of wind from the behind trees came and carried the unique smell of fire burns.

「Was there a battle nearby?」

「There is no sound coming means, it's over right?」

In the surrounding with only dark green forest, the sounds of tree leaves rustling, insects crying and birds chirping can only be heard.

「It won't become a forest fire, right?」

「No, in that case the smoke should have been present, there should be traces left of someone fighting」

That too, would be without a doubt a magician who uses fire, a guess they all had.

「There doesn't seem to be any abnormality, let's move」

On the leader's decision, the members assented and moved into the dark green forest with even more vigilance than before.

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In the end, there was an 'abnormality'.

「W, What is this.....」

After walking a bit, along with the smell of vegetations burnt, an offensive smell of something living thing burnt also came.

Due to the thick scent, they moved forward to see the situation,

「Awessomeeeee.....Raptors nest is completely roasted」

Spread across a wide range, the cruel scene of many sets of parent and child in the raptor's nest were all burnt to death.

Originally, they too had come to take the lives of Raptors, so they didn't had any resistance in killing after all this time.

But, being exposed to this overwhelming fire power, with no existence of anyone living other than the ground, this scene with earth being scorched could make them feel merciless cruelty.

Seeing more clearly, the traces of dented earth explains that many powerful fire offensive magics were used and they fell like a storm in the nest of Raptors.

「Just how much of a great magician can burn everything to cleanliness to this extent?」

「Fuck that, is this the work of an adventurer?」

The destruction and sweltering heat is as though Ifrit itself has appeared. It's more easier to convince the mind, saying a powerful monster did this. That is because, if it was an adventurer, they could've used more smart way to finish the battle, at the very least they shouldn't have used the AOE attack that would even burn the vegetation.

「No, but this is without a doubt the work of adventurer」

How can you tell? The magician asks Eddie, he points to the black burnt corpse of Raptor and explained.

「The claws on the right are clipped of, the proof of subjugation」

They look everywhere in the surrounding while being surprised, without any discrimination, the right claws didn't exist on any of the raptor.

「Seriously, this is just too much」

「They have done this much, no doubt it's a rank 4 adventurer」

「But, would a rank 4 adventurer aim at the nest of Dagger Raptors?」

「It can be they used an AOE attack on a whim, there are people there who no one can understand」

They calmed down on their reasoning that a high-ranked adventurer launched a powerful fire magic on whim.

The occupation of adventurer is different from that of knight, and there would be more than 50,000 of them who would have broken ethical values. So, it's not that of a rare situation.

Then, thinking they saw something unusual, they left that place.

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That day, student party led by Eddie, couldn't meet any Dagger Raptor. It wasn't them who had bad luck,

「What the fuck.....aren't the dagger raptors all exterminated?」

Because the 5 nests of Dagger Raptors they found after walking the mountain the whole day were cleanly roasted.

No, the raptors weren't the only ones who met the harsh reality of being burnt. The rank 1 monsters with wolf bodies, the Vindol were also in the same shape.

The rank 1 monsters, Dagger Raptors and Vindol, ruled the area, had their nests attacked and their numbers decreased.

Most probably the monsters who escaped the danger, ran towards the other areas while trembling in fear, they wouldn't have time to attack other adventurers coming their way.

Thanks to that, today ended up meeting with minority of low ranked 2 times.

「Who is it that said that it was on a whim?」

「No, normally who would think that such strong magician would go after a rank 1 monsters, would someone?」

With having a scene they had gotten familiar with, in front of the fifth nest of raptors they started quarreling.

「What should we do, at this rate we can't complete the quest」

「Certainly, we wouldn't find them so easily」

「What if, crushing the hopes of beginners is becoming a fad in the guild?」

If a high-ranked adventurer became serious, the low-ranked quests would be finished easily.

Though the Guild keep out the quest for Raptor subjugation 24×7, but if there is no subjugation target what can be done?

If the extinction of monster in the area was confirmed, the quest would without a doubt, be cancelled.

Though, within half a year or so, the same monster or another new kind of monster would arrive from some other area, in the end the quest for subjugation would once again be put out.

But, there's a problem if it occurred now, quests have something called as time limit.

「Calm down, tomorrow let's move somewhere different, we would certainly get at least 5 Dagger Raptors」

「But, if this Ifrit Bastard moved in the direction we head to——」

「Stop it, don't speak anymore than that」

Eddie stops the ominous comment of the other member.

「Anyhow, let's call it day for now」

Along with the voice of affirmation, the group showed signs of fatigue though they hadn't fought, and decided to leave the place.

While praying, 'Please don't make us fail the quest!'



Chapter 176 – Nightmare Berserker

「We are the, son of 『Sword King』 Leonhart Tristan Spada, the great man owning the, the white holy sword, forbidden black magic, and, the epitome of darkness, the reincarnation of demon king, that's right, We are Wilhart Tristan Spa—」 (SK: Wilhart uses 'Waga' for 'I' which is more 'royal')

A rusted iron sword in goblin's hand is swung towards the slim male student, wearing a red mantle proving him to be a leader cadet in the Royal Spada Academy and is naming himself in loud voice.

「Daaaaaaa!?!」

Stopping naming himself in the middle, he does a forward somersault with all his power to evade the sword, that boy is the leader cadet shouldering the future of Spada, Wilhart.

Due to the somersault his monocle was about to fall, in a quite haste, he fixed it and stood back up to only howl at the goblin while pointing at it.

「You son of a bitch! To actually attack without hesitation while someone is naming themselves, you really are a rude savage!」

「It's not a savage but a monster, you're a big idiot to expect it to show manners」

From behind Wilhart's back, a refreshing beautiful voice came.

It's owner is, a maid wearing a pure white apron with no signs of dirt at all within this thick forest.

Pale green colored hair braid in a ponytail, the light blue eyes and face with adult beauty, would be like an elder sister if compared to Wilhart.

Otherwise, that manner of speaking which doesn't mince matters even against her master, shows the good relationship of that of siblings.

「Very well, in that case to this savage knight, We——」

「It's just a normal goblin」

「We will tell you the etiquettes of how nobles fight! By this great man owning the white holy sword, forbidden black magic, and, the epitome of darkness, the reincarnation of demon king, Wilhart Tristan Spadaaaaaaaaaa!?!」

Once again the powerful slash of the goblin assaulted Wilhart who is howling at it while pointing his finger.

And, once again he did a front somersault with full strength to evade the attack.

While spoiling the costume of a leader cadet which is a symbol representing Spada's glory, he stands up in an unrefined manner.

「You attack us not once but twice using fowl techniques.....We won't forgive you, definitely not!」

As though to win against Wilhart in howling, goblins too bellows while spitting saliva.

「We would let you become the rust for our White Holy Sword! Here we go, you barbarian knight!!」

「Wil-sama work hard. Also, that's a goblin」

Wilhart takes out the rapier made of mithril from the scabbard hanging on his waist, though in a very textbook style, he took a clumsy stance and faced the rogue goblin.

Wilhart has already entered the world of fighting man against man, he can't possibly hear the words of the boorish maid anymore.

「Haaaaaa, in response to our request, reveal your true form, 『Holy Sword Vaiceschveato』 !」

「It's only a normal 『Mithril Rapier』 」

「And take this! The secret martial skill passed down in the royal family of Spada since time immemorial, 『Heinrich Untergang』 」

「It's only a 『Slash』 」

Voice of boorish maid, can't be heard! while praying wholeheartedly, Wilhart assaults the goblin in front of him with a normal 『Mithril Rapier』 , while using 『Slash』 which he had learnt many times in the classes of the Academy.

Though it did reveal the might of martial skill, the straightforward swordsmanship was just too easy to understand and couldn't surpass Goblins reflexes.

With high agility like that of a monkey, goblin evaded the slash attack with a side step, in that posture assaults Wilhart.

「It evadeddd! Nuooooo!!」

From that moment onwards, without any martial skills or sword techniques, it changed into a competition of mudslinging.

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「Fuu, it was quite good, you nameless barbarian」

Like that, Wilhart gives the words of departing of Goblin who is now lying on the ground without moving even a bit.

His red hair inherited from his father, is disheveled due to evading here and there by somersaulting and rolling, right now a single green leaf is sticking to them.

It can be seen at a glance, the black blazer type uniform and bright red mantle are slightly dirty from the sap of weeds and mud, it has some traces left of the fierce fight against goblin.

Wilhart looked down upon the loser by making his golden eyes shine, though he himself won narrowly.

「For you have to this much hard time against just one goblin, as expected of Wil-sama」

While revealing a brutal light in her pale light blue eyes, the maid gives her blessing to her master, Wilhart.

「That's right praise us Seria, We haven't released even half of our true power! Fuhahahahaha!!」

Hitting both hands on waist, Wilhart raises a loud laughter, his whole body is without a doubt slightly dirty and shows that he won by a narrow chance. But, aside from his father's wild looking appearance, this intelligent looking face, white skin as though he were a shut-in student, his thin body which can somehow gather power to take stance with sword, everything only looks like that of a bookworm student, so Wilhart should be praised that he even defeated a single goblin with sword.

Long story short, it means that he worked really hard.

「Well then, let's search for the rest of 4 goblins」

Seria, the maid in an indifferent tone, tells the progress of 5 goblin subjugation quest and urges her master to make haste.

「Fumu, this was just the weakest of all The Great 4 Barbarians, the other ones waiting are the true deadly weapon knights with true power」

「The Great Four, in that case, wouldn't one be left out?」

「Fu, that one left in the end is the 『Sword King』 that controls The Great 4 Barbarians, the abominable tyrannical ruler, Barbarian King!」

Hmm, while shaking her ponytail in the light breeze, Seria throws appropriate words at Wilhart with a mannequin-like expressionless face.

「Well then let's make haste, let it be the goblin quartet or their general, just kill the 4 of them fast.」

「Wrrrrroooong! It's The Great 4 Barbarian and Barbarian King!!」

「There is a nest near here, let's get near it and then search」

Seria turns over the long skirt of apron dress and starts running on the mountain road, her movement is like that of pair of wings helping her.

「W-Wait! Don't leave your Master who has completed a Soul Contract with you!!」

Before he lost sight of her, Wilhart, in a panic, started chasing behind the maid who has run before him.

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「It's strange, we should be very near the nest, but I don't feel the presence of Goblin at all」

Seria, who stopped abruptly, says those words with a nonchalant face.

「Pant.....Pant.....I, Is that true? Certainly, We too.....cannot feel.....the evil waves, the.....speciality of..... The Great 4s」

Leaning on a tree, Wilhart replies a completely nonsense crap while gasping, apparently, he doesn't know that it's good to breath without talking.

「Either the nest is extinct or has moved otherwise is in the middle of fighting——let's go and check it」

「Eh, Ah, Already.....」

He urges to let him rest for a little more while with eyes of pitiful puppy, but the maid with no hint of understanding her master's urges, starts running the mountain road once again.

「V, Very well.....in that case the time for us to remove the seal of Soma and revive has come.....Fu, Kukuku.....」

Like that, he drinks the potion for recovery (500 klan) taken out from pouch, and chases after Seria so that he doesn't lose sight of her.

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I'm a man like the example of bean sprouts, Wilhart carries that in actual real life practice, gathering willpower somehow, he chases after the apron dress with the contrast of white and blue.

Seria has stopped for hiding in the bushes, but he is doubtful as to why she has stopped here.

There is no way she would stop for him, she is the maid who doesn't give a fuck about her master, or so Wilhart is thinking.

「*Pant*.....*Heavy Pant* What happened, stopping here,did something——」

Seria turns back in a second, and shuts Wilhart's mouth with the dress glove she is wearing on her hands.

「Nnnh!? Nn, NNMU~!! (Y-You! Don't tell us that plan to betray us)」

「Keep quiet, and look at that」

Upon being urged by Seria, Wilhart rides her urge and looks on the other side of bushes.

Apparently there is a cliff on the other side of bushes, so he was able to get an unbroken view of the whole meadow spread below the cliff.

And, he realized that place is one of the nests of Goblin, out of numerous nests of Goblins present in the northern part of Galahad Mountains.

It would be obvious to anyone, because there are many storage shed like buildings and goblins near it.

「O, Oi! There is someone there!？」

Wilhart suddenly noticed, there is a lone man present inside that nest.

No, there is no way he won't notice, after all that man is basking in the hostile glares of numerous goblins surrounding him.

「Why is an apprentice magician in a place like that alone!？」

Wilhart releases that line unintentionally, Seria too knows there is no time for composure left.

Aside from that, the thing more worrying it why an apprentice magician jumped into the nest of goblins.

The black robe with simple design worn by the man is a normal cloth that can be found anywhere, but Wilhart, who goes to Royal Spada Academy, knows that the robe is the robe apprentice magicians of Academy are obligated to wear.

In fact, he himself is wearing so he can't be wrong.

「Not good, we have to save him before it get's too late!」

「I can't think of anything happening if Wil-sama jumps in the nest against that many goblins」

「You thought of throwing me alone in there!？」

Wilhart completely lost his haughty first person 'We', and urges Seria for saving the man who he hasn't seen before, but might be going to the same Academy.

「Please, Seria save him!」

And above all, the man is a citizen of Spada.

As the son of King Leonhart, as a person of royal family, he can't possibly let a citizen die in front of him.

At the very least, Wilhart does think like that wholeheartedly.

[I can't be useful in a fight, but you can fight against 100 or 200 goblins, right, that's why please, I will pay extra pay to you after this]

Seria heaves a small sigh, seeing him requesting from someone of lower class than him, and muttered.

「Good Grief, at times like this only Wil-sama acts like a cool person——」

Please! To Wilhart who is joining his hands and without hesitation lowering his head, the mutterings of Seria can't be heard.

「Understood, let's save him」

「Whoa, Really!」

「But,—」

Seria points to the meadow below, and declares with confidence.

「—I don't think he will need any help」

「Ha?」

Wilhart widened his eyes in surprise, but the next moment he understood the meaning of Seria's words.

「—Wha!?!」

In the hand of apprentice magician, at some point was a single sword.

He is a magician, so why is he equipped with something like sword?

No, looking at that the 'abnormality' of that sword, a doubt like this would never come up.

That's because, the hatchet clenched in the hands of man, is having a large a wide blade portion, and is clad in an ominous and dark brown aura.

「Is that, a cursed weapon!?!」

「Yeah, based on the looks, it is.」

Even a beginner would only think it to be cursed weapon after seeing the fiendish aura covering it.

But, the man holding the cursed hatchet, is only standing silently without showing hints of madness or actions of those who are possessed by the curse.

The stance is different from what is told in Spada, but even Wilhart, who got saved in the sword classes by barely passing from failure understood, that the stance is of a person who is master of swordsmanship.

「Don't tell me.....he can use the cursed weapons」

The muttering can't be heard by the apprentice magician in far distance, but, as to reply to his question the man moved.

The man, assaulted the goblins carrying the hatchet against the crowd of goblins coming at him from all four sides—.

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Heaps of corpses, the scene that can't be explained anything else was spread below.

There are corpses of goblins spread everywhere, spurting out the entrails and blood in a flashy manner, not even one is a complete body with every part present.

And, the figure of man who created this hell with just one hatchet, was no more in that place.

「As expected, there was no need to save him」

Yeah, while replying that, Wilhart recalled the scenes of battles that was ongoing before.

The single man, with just one hatchet, cut down the flood of goblins coming from all directions.

With just one swing of hatchet, the torso, hands legs, and head are dissected.

On the contrary, the blades of more than dozens of goblins, never reached the body of the man.

This was no more fighting, but one-sided slaughter, similar to atrocity.

The man without showing signs of being mad, just indifferently, like he was given orders to repeat something simple, kept on cutting the goblins with a cold expression showing no emotions as though he were a servant of someone.

He wasn't angry either, but that man

「It's a berserker」

Seemed to fit that nickname.

「Ku, Fufufu.....Fuahahahahahaha! That's right, that guy is the Nightmare Berserker」

「Sigh, is that so?」

「That's right!」

The man got himself a name out of his permission, but the man has already left the place, and he never noticed the presence of these two either, so there was no room for complaints.

「The time goes back to 10 years ago, a tragedy occurred that pushed down the kind-hearted apprentice magician into madness for revenge, yes, it was later called as Red Night in Spada, the ghastly——」

「I think it's rude to fabricate someone's past」

And, the incident of 『Red Night of Spada』 doesn't exist, at the very least, Seria hasn't heard of it.

「He's Awesome, He's Cool, that Nightmare Berserker!」

「Did you get high after seeing a stimulating fight.....」

Seria while sighing heavily that she can't handle him anymore, had to listen to the legendary stories of the Nightmare Berserker from Wilhart.



Chapter 177 – Rank 2

「Yes, certainly all the quests' completion are now confirmed.」

The young receptionist, Erina, somehow stalled the surprise in her heart and said in a business-like manner.

It wasn't that she was being embarrassed like a lovestruck maiden in front of this adventurer named Kurono who can get 90 points alone with his face, but she was simply surprised by the fact that all the quests have been cleared.

(Eh, What, just how did he clear all his quests? And not even one week has passed since then, no, more than that, what the hell is with this massive amount of number of subjugated monsters!?)

The massive amount of parts of subjugated monster was something Erina hadn't seen even once since employment.

(124 Dagger Raptors, 87 goblins, 52 Vindol.....*sigh* the 5 Punpun seems the abnormality here.....but the most abnormal is 376 slimes)

Rank 1 monsters are weak, to cover up that there are lot of them.

Killing 100 or 200 won't make them extinct, but giving these three-digit numbers is something not possible for a rank 1 adventurer.

This 376 slimes are not something rare, since they outbreak in large numbers sometimes, but even meeting a group of 100+ slimes, rank 3 adventurer too would choose evasion.

For getting these many numbers of monsters within less than a week, only means directly confronting the group or the nest.

Although there are sometimes, reckless rank 1 adventurers who try to challenge the nests, but most are killed, and if they survived, they would retire from being adventurer.

But, Kurono still looks cool like he did some days before when he came, he isn't looking scared or traumatised at all.

No, in reality he has presented this many proofs of subjugation,
(Is this person.....by chance, really strong?)

So it's natural to think that Kurono is hiding power not that of rank 1 adventurer.

(No, wait, calm down me, people with power not matching their ranks are not so easy find)

There is also the system of starting being adventurer from rank 3 if the person has enough power as that of soldier when registering as an adventurer.

Due to that, it's extremely rare to find people having power above rank 1.

But extremely rare, doesn't mean they don't exist.

One famous exception would be, the eldest son of 『Sword King』 Leonhart, in other words the first prince, Eisenhart Tristan Spada, reached rank 5 from rank 1 while still being in Royal Spada Academy.

Other would be, the secret disciples of master magicians or martial artists who live and train in mountains, come out in world and increase the rank at terrifying speed.

However, even the prince and disciples are all who have learnt stronger martial skills or attack magic while being rank 1, and adventurer's starting line.

And, people like them can be differentiated on the equipment they wear, at the very much least, they wouldn't appear wearing white shirt and worn-out leather pants.

Right now Kurono is wearing an apprentice magician robe too, but it too is of the lowest grade equipment.

It's rash to think of him as those rare people with more power.

(This is.....right, the party members are strong, that's right!)

Erina wavered.

Thinking on it, the completion of quest by acting as parasite and relying on party members is the most easily acceptable thing.

Occasionally, the idiotic noble spoiled children who are fascinated by the epic tales of adventurers, take party members as bodyguards and do their 'adventurer play'.

People like this appear more easily than the disciples of masters, or rather, they are the only ones who are in existence in the current age.

(*sigh*, Unfortunate, truly unfortunate, if Kurono-san were a mysterious man who lied about his power, I would've given you 90 points)

While she is indulging in her thinkings,

「Excuse me, we can become rank 2 with this, right?」

「Yes, with this Kurono-sama and your party 『Element Master』 will be promoted to rank 2. Congratulations」

She would still be able to reply to the other person while still keeping on thinking, that's her awesome part.

「I will need to update the guild card right now, so please wait a moment」

Like that, Erina operates the magic item for reading and writing on the guild card with one hand.

「Will you do the updation of other party members too right now?」

「Well, it can be done later, but it's normal to get it updated at the same time. Would you be in the possession of members card too?」

Yes, while replying with a clear voice, two guild cards with iron lustre are handed to Erina.

(! Isn't this just an iron plate!)

The expectations of gold guild card was toppled over in a second.

The updation said by Erina is the completion of quest, but seems like the updation understood by Kurono is the the promoting the other rank 1 members like him.

If he is a idiotic noble son, then no doubt a rank 3 adventurer would be his bodyguard.

Though personal bodyguard work is a different occupation from that of an adventurer, but for showing the proof of their strength, most keep the guild cards with them.

(If all members are rank 1, that means there is no bodyguard hired——wait, in the first place, if he were a noble son, wouldn't his equipment be better than this, this one is just crap!)

In the end, Erina reconsidered the adventurer named as Kurono to be just some low-ragged adventurer at any place.

And, at the time of reading the guild cards of his party members, that thinking only deepens.

(Lilly, Rank 1.....Fiona Soleil, Rank 1.....both have registered in the same Irz Village at almost same times)

Only the guess that a group of young country bumpkins came to Spada while admiring adventurers can come to my mind while seeing this information.

(No, but the structure of this party is completely strange, 2 magicians and Lily, the fairy, huh, isn't that just a race name instead of class!)

For example, humans don't write their class to be human, class explains the fighting style of person frankly, in worst, it explains the type of weapon the person uses.

But, Kurono is not worried in the least that this race name is written as the class.

(Anyways, it's true that this Kurono and his party are not any normal rank 1 people!)

The moment she thought that, the evaluation towards Kurono,

(Currently, it's impossible to give him a correct score.)

Is amended.

At the same she thought that this man, Kurono, is a bottomless person, he started looking charming to her.

(This is one great rookie with great future, Ufufu, I've got to check his developments from now on)

Like that, Kurono and 『Element Master』, the rank 1,

「Yes, the updation is over」

no, them who just got promoted to rank 2, are given the bronze plated guild card by Erina with her eyes filled with expectations.

「Congratulations, I wish good luck to you」

It's the standard line to be said on increasing rank, but this is the first time Erina has inserted her true feelings in it.

「Thank you very much」

Like that, Kurono takes the bronze plated guild card while showing a smile, which somehow gives sense of relief, on his mostly expressionless face.

(Aren't that was a bit cool, ugh.....)

Erina felt her heart beating faster which she hasn't felt in a long time, but Kurono spoke in a voice that showed he noticed nothing.

「Excuse me, can I ask something?」

「Yes, what might it be?」

Though Erina said that, she has already guessed what he would ask.

「Can you tell me the quests necessary for rising to rank 3?」

Bingo, In the brain of Erina, the rank 2 monster list is already open.

「Yes, here they would be」

She took out the bundle of all rank 2 quests, takes out the quests fulfilling the requirements for rank promotion, and presents them to Kurono.

「Then——」

「Ufufu, would you take them all?」

On those half-jokingly words, Kurono with a somewhat surprised expression,

「Yes, please do」

Strongly nodded.

(Well then, if he easily gets promoted to rank 3 too, then he is.....the real deal)

Erina started the processing of paperwork for taking quests, while her heart beats faster with expectations.

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. .

(POV: Kurono)

This branch Guild is completely different from the ones I had been using.

In the first place the sizes are different, the Alsace one was 4-storey including the inn space, here the business space alone is 5-storey.

The number of storey are same, but there is comparable difference in the height between floor area and the ceiling, now that's what you will find overwhelming.

Even after taking this fact, there is a clear difference in the atmosphere between the two.

If you take a guild of village to be bar, this one more like a government office with hard atmosphere drifting around it.

There is no space to eat meal in the lobby, only a wide white painted space is spread out, even the adventurers are somewhat looking like salarymen.

No, it must be because there are more people wearing blazer-like clothes, that's why I'm thinking like that.

I, who has always been using the small guilds in remote countryside, this noisy place in other sense, with only business-like words spoken, only office work is done, gives me sense of discomfort.

I wonder if I will get used to this feeling by the time I reach rank 3, oh hell with my over-positive thinking.

First of all, I need to think about reaching rank 3 as soon as possible.

「So then, Kurono-san was tempted by that beautiful receptionist, and once again you have taken lot of quests, right?」

「O-Oi, don't make me sound like a bad person」

I reply while getting a somewhat cold stare from Fiona.

「Mu-!」

For some reason it feels like Lily too is also staring at me with dissatisfied look, it's certainly my imagination, after all the small Lily is a reasonable and good child who listens to me.

「It won't hurt to increase rank fast, right, even if it's rank 2, it won't take much time to clear it too. We don't need to subjugate 100 or 200 of monsters this time either.」

「Isn't Kurono-san the same who killed 100?」

「No, I am was good and I killed only 87」

It's still the same! I got a retort from Fiona, quite rare.

No, at first I had thought to return back after killing 5, but it felt like the hatchet will evolve, so I worked hard and let it drink lots of blood.

And oh great, I challenged the whole nest of goblin without Sword Arts or Bullet Arts, but just a single hatchet, as though I was a swordsman.

In the end, it still didn't evolve though.

「So, how many quests are there?」

「11 in total」

Different from last time the time limits this time are all different, if we completed them in order, it would be over in around a month or so.

I only took the quests with low time durations, like kicking out the escort quests.

Entering dungeons, it all ends up on one's strength, if we stay in there for some days, it's easy to get 10 or 20 monsters.

「I see, certainly with that it might work somehow」

While turn pages of quest documents, Fiona too consents.

「It's good that you weren't simply deceived by the charm of the receptionist」

「Why are you feeling relieved?」

Can't you try to not speak those lines in front of a child, Fiona-san. Thanks to that, it feels like Lily's stare is hurting me.

「Well, to congratulate for our promotion to rank 2, shall we go and drink?」

I hand over the 2 new guild cards to both of them.

「O-」

「Wa-!」

The two take the guild card with considerably happy expressions.

Yeah, it certainly is deeply moving.

「In other words, it means today is Spada Gourmet Tour Round 2, right?」

「Ah, Argh.....Yeah, it's alright to think it like that」

It's not like I'm treating her, it will be fine, right? Right? [ET: It's not double typing of words]

「Thanks to you both working so much that monsters almost went extinct——look at this!」

SFX: Don!

I put down the bag filled with 10K klan gold coins.

Whoa~~, Lily and Fiona congratulate while clapping both their hands.

「Eat and drink as much as you want, it would fine to split the amount after eating, right?」

The sharing of rewards, the equal splitting, standard rule of adventurers, is also being used in our 『Element Master』 .

「But, is it alright, without having Kurono-san's equipment bought?」

「No, it's fine to do that after reaching rank 3. The reward this time, is enough to make a living, but not even enough to let me buy the equipments I want」

The cursed weapon, even one is 100,000 klan, all this reward will only become some small change.

My share of rewards is one-third, so I will have to keep on completing the quests until I reach rank 3, or else I won't earn the money to buy it.

「It's fine like that, but if it's a little less, Lily-san and I can support as well.」

「Thanks, but it's good that you feel that way」

Financial relationships should be kept clean to the extreme extent, I am of having an equal relationship with these two.

I'm still only 17 years old, I don't have much life-experience that I can solve problems while bearing a strange anxiety factor, it's good to be always careful!

「It's more desirable that Kurono-san buys right equipment and increases the power, neither I nor Lily-san have any attachments to money. So, you don't have to be so stubborn, right?」

Fiona and Lily urge me,

「Yeah, Lily will buy a weapon for Kurono!」

And on those pure and clean words my heart aches.

What is this.....why do i feel like a bad guy who's deceiving them into supporting me financially?.....

「T-Thanks.....but if I take money, I will definitely return them with interest added with interest-rates in gray-zone」

「Gray-zone? Well that's right, Kurono does seem like you will be able to accept it easily if it's in the form of loan」

「Lily will buy one for you~!」

Please stop recklessly supporting me, I mean seriously, it makes me anxious.

「A-Anyways, let's forget the work relationship for now and celebrate, right?」

「Let's explore a new shop today」

This was quite a forced way to change topics but, I won.

「Alrighty, let's move. Ah, that's right, Lily, will you get in my hood after a long time?」

I completed the formation with Lily who jumped in the hood while smiling, and we left the guild in high-spirits. [ET: The formation is something like. *dark past emerges* Power Ranger Robots formation *dark past submerges* argh, forget it!]

Chapter 178 - Demon Hunting

In the bushes, a single child had been lying collapsed.

Since the child was lying face-down, his appearance was not visible but the hair colour was light brown and skin was white. From the arms, wings of the same colour as the hair were extending and from the back and below, bird legs with the same coloured plumage were present.

That is, it wasn't a human child but a Harpy child.

And on its back, 2 arrows were stabbed and maybe one of the arrows had hit the wings, feathers had been scattered all over the place as well.

"Wow~ as expected of the famous and brave Earl Bergunt! Brilliantly done!~"

"Hahaha this was nothing compared to firing a bow on the battlefield, Bishop-dono."

The two human men on horseback were chatting happily in front of the corpse of the harpy child.

On was a slim clergyman on a white horse and his pace looks exactly like those sly-foxes that appeared in fairy tales.

The white clothing with a design covering his whole body was, as said, for the personal use of only Bishop ranked people.

The other person was a tall and lean young man riding a grey horse.

His hair and eyes were dark green, the same colour that represented the primary magic of wind and his well-trained lean body was covered from tip to toe in silver ornamented light armour.

By their attire, it could be easily told that both of them were men of high standing and status.

"Thank you very much, Bishop-dono, for inviting me today to this event. I haven't had the chance to draw my bow even once after coming to Pandora so I was worried that my skills would start rusting away like this."

The man who laughed in a loud voice, Earl Bergunt, led one section of those reinforcements who came to Pandora seeking land and riches after the battle at Goldran.

Among the reinforcements, most of them belonged to the army dispatched by Cardinal Mercedes but as his title suggests, this Earl Bergunt was a noble of Syncrea Republic and belonged to a power different from the church.

“No no, you’re far too kind. In fact, I’m the one honoured as someone great as you decided to take part in this. It really put up a flower on this [Demon Hunting]——“

The man delivering the smooth words of compliment and flattery was the right hand man of Cardinal Mercedes sent to Pandora, Bishop Gregorius.

Though they belonged to the same Crusaders, both of them were rivals who were fighting to gain rights over Pandora but the reason they are chatting so pleasantly like this is not because that they were old friends or something like that. They simply had a much better reason for this.

“Now then, this Harpy was the last one remaining. Time really flies when you’re enjoying, but it’s time for closure.”

“Yes, it’s truly unfortunate.....ah, but, whether coincidence or the will of our God, I was able to get closer to Earl Bergunt like this so, would you mind joining me for a friendly chat?”

Bergunt fleetingly glanced around his surroundings.

No matter how much paid attention, there was no presence of any other human, meaning, only the two of them were here right now.

Well it was only obvious. They were running on horses to chase after Harpy children who could fly away for some time.

Their play style was more of cornering them slowly instead of instantly killing them but it’ll take some time for either of their attendants to reach here.

That means, for the time being there was no one who could hear their conversation.

“Oh, I’ll be happy to! For me to get to personally hear directly from Bishop-dono.”

“No no, it’s not something like a noble sermon. I specialise in more realistic, profitable talks.”

Hou, giving a small response, he urged Gregorius to continue.

“For example Earl Bergunt, you have been worried that you didn’t get a chance to use your bow till now, am I correct?”

“Truly said, we were a step late in coming to Pandora after all.”

Because of your damn Mercedes faction! But he didn’t go so far and say that.

After hearing the victory of the Crusaders at Goldran, both the church under Mercedes and the forces under Bergunt prepared to leave for Pandora almost at the same time.

But what led to the gap between them was how quickly they could obtain a ship to get to Pandora.

Mercedes was able to gain control over the ships meant for army use faster than anyone else and was able to get his own army to Pandora faster than anyone else.

And by the time the army led by Gregorius had landed on Pandora, finally then Bergunt and others’ turn came.

But, since they had been already late, by the time they reached Pandora, the territory of Daedalus was almost captured completely.

Thus, without any place to go, their armies were currently staying on standby with nothing to do.

“nfufu, what are you saying, almost 90% of Pandora is still under the control of demons, you know? The true occupation and invasion will start from here onwards. That was what you were thinking as well, which is why you are quickly preparing to charge into Spada, right?”

Bergunt who had been giving off a calm atmosphere till now suddenly gave off a dangerous atmosphere now.

It was intimidating pressure only someone who had gone through countless battlefields could have gained.

“As expected of the [Prophet], that title isn’t just for show.”

Why was something that they had been secretly doing to avoid getting noticed by the Mercedes faction so easily found out?

One would be satisfied considering that Gregorius himself proclaimed himself as a [Prophet] without any embarrassment.

If he could actually do something like [Predictions], no matter how much secretive you are, he could guess things right without any proof or basis.

Then, if it really is something that troublesome——Bergunt could only think that way.

“Don’t make a scary face like that. Though we are affiliated to different organisations, we are currently working under the same name of the Crusaders. Also, even if not that, aren’t we the followers of the same White God?”

Spreading his arms, Gregorius preached of brotherhood but Bergunt’s suspicions didn’t disappear at all.

“Well, with the intention of give and take, we are thinking of handing over the chance of being the vanguard to attack Spada to you.”

Hearing those words, Bergunt’s vigilance slightly loosened.

“Is that what His Highness Cardinal Mercedes thinking or is that your personal decision, Bishop-dono?”

“Both, actually. We of the church are not thinking of doing something as greedy as putting direct control of the church over all of the territory of Pandora and leave nothing for the nobles. There are people who follow and worship the church which is why it exists. We do not want to create suspicion among the nobles who consist of a large population simply because of a petty thing like disputes over lands.”

Even while knowing the fierce fight over land happening behind the scenes, Bergunt felt like giving a wry smile to Gregorius who labelled it as a ‘petty thing’.

“Both His Excellency Cardinal and me are thinking of sharing the limited lands between us on good terms. We, of the church, obtained Daedalus this time. Then, you people should get the next land of the same approx size next, right?”

“fuhahaha! The church is fine with giving away half of Pandora? What a modest way of thinking as expected of clergymen who serve God!”

Of course! Gregorius replied laughing as he didn't sense the sarcasm in Bergunt's words.

“But still, His Excellency Cardinal Mercedes possesses generous thoughts like sharing the lands but what about Cardinal Ars? We don't know how he thinks. After all, he's still young and he was the one who first led the invasion of Pandora after all. It won't be weird of him to hold other aspirations as well, right?”

Bergunt had also heard normally about what kind of person Cardinal Ars is, of course, 'normally' meant in terms of a noble so the information was much better.

It didn't end with just his magnificent record of how he released the lands from the heretics with the help of 7th Apostle Sariel and 12th Apostle Mariabelle, he also knew specific info about his skills and abilities and how he reached the position of a Cardinal so quickly as well.

“The lands of Pandora are simply obtained in the process of spreading and offering to our God, that is, Cardinal Mercedes doesn't mind even if those lands were further halved as well.”

Bergunt finally seems to be satisfied so once again he turned back to his gentle but yet somewhat daring smile.

“fumu, fumu, I see, if the church is ready to share the lands with us for such modest thoughts, it seems Cardinal Mercedes, who possesses benevolence truly equal to God, would be more suited as the next Pope surely.”

In the Cross Religion, the right to vote in deciding the next Pope in the [Conclave] didn't belong to just clergymen but to also the members of the parliament and the nobles as well.

For a cardinal with the rights to become a Pope obtaining favour of the nobles held what kind of meaning, even a slightly educated man could discern.

“And, above all, it's important to become the biggest contributor to offering Pandora to the God as the oracle proclaimed. To obtain God's trust holds much more significance than getting simply riches and land after all.”

“HaHaHa, it is as you say! Brilliant! To be able to say that without hesitation, I think I have seen a true clergyman in front of me.”

It's great you understand. Gregorius coolly answered.

“For the time being, we shall give you the currently in construction, Alsace fort, for the purpose of capturing Spada.”

“Alsace.....fuhaha, it's that interesting village where that 'devil' appeared eh?”

The battle and capture of Alsace had become famous enough that even Bergunt who was in Daedalus had heard of it.

After all, it had generated a huge amount of sacrifices which could be considered a stain in the records. It was obvious that it'll become famous, after all, bad information flies even faster.

“I believe you already know but Spada is beyond the rugged Gallahad mountain ranges and the only highway connecting to it is from Alsace.”

“I had heard that for mere demons, they had maintained it quite well as well.”

“Yes, it's a fact. We can't doubt an Apostle's words, can we?”

And, though not as big of a rumour but Bergunt had heard that it was 11th Apostle Misa, who had secretly come to Pandora, that had ended the battle.

“The problem is whether or not we can capture the Spada's fortress in the Gallahad Mountains.”

“Though mere demons, there was also the case at Alsace, please do not be negligent against them, okay?”

“What, now that we are in a 'cooperative relationship', we can prepare without any anxiety and will focus on the enemy in front of us.”

Bergunt who answered that had a sharp light in his eyes like a bird who had found its prey.

“nfufufu, I’ll be counting on you then. Oh right, it’ll take some time till the completion of Alsace fort. After all, we are working towards accepting newcomers in Daedalus as well so it’s taking some time.”

“I don’t mind. In fact we won’t mind taking over a temporary random place till then. Kukuku, leave everything to us. The glorious flag of our Cross will soon be seen at the royal castle of Spada!”

Kuro No Maou

- Volume 12 -

Royal Spada Academy

Chapter 179 - Chairwoman

(POV 3rd person)

The one sitting in front of him, wearing a thin silk lascivious dress, was a beautiful young dark elf.

With a darkish brown skin colour opposite to the white skin of normal elves, and her feminine voluptuous body along with the Valhalla Silk dress barely covering her body further increased her charm.

If it was a normal man, his eyes would automatically be attracted towards her plentiful chest which was barely covered and seemed to spill out any moment, her curvy waist line, and her plump thighs visible from the slit that continued from below her hips.

No, maybe they would not be able to even move away from her face that looked like a sculpture of a goddess.

Glossy silver that shined like mithril were tied behind her head, and the silver hair dangling from there held extreme beauty but maybe because it also held magical energy, it gave of a pressure like the tail of a dragon.

Her whole face was made as if trying to perfectly follow the golden ratio but even among that, her long blue eyes were especially prominent.

And, those marine crystal-like blue eyes held languidness as usual but they were currently perfectly focused on the small boy sitting in front of her.

“You did well coming back Simon. I’m happy that you’re safe.”

“Ye, Yes.....It seems I have made you worry, I’m very sorry for that, Chairwoman.”

Simon answered with a somewhat restless manner. Just as he said, this beauty was, in fact, the Chairwoman of the Royal Spada Academy, Sofia Sirius Pacifal.

And this place was obviously, the Chairwoman’s office.

As if boldly emphasising the fact that the chairwoman was the absolute top in the school’s authority, the room was located at the centre and the highest point of the school and the whole city of Spada could be overlooked from

the whole wall that had been made of not just glass but high priced Scea Crystal.

“I believe I told you call me Sofia 3 months back, did you forget already?”

“Ah, no.....not at all.”

In front of the flustered Simon who gave a vague answer, Sofia seemed like a sly snake in front of its prey.

“That’s how our relationship is, right? No need to be so hesitant.”

Simon anguished over how a normal student and the Chairwoman had a relationship where he shouldn’t feel hesitant but he remembered that it was the same when he first met this beautiful dark elf as well.

Basically, he was not good with dealing with this woman.

“Then, um.....Sofia-san.”

“umu, Well, this is better atleast.”

She seemed to imply that using ‘-san’ was also unnecessary but he was not like Kurono who could easily talk freely with even his seniors.

“Thank you for allowing me to return back to school.”

“I only did what was obvious, it’s nothing that requires any thanks.”

Simon bowed his head in gratitude but his heart couldn’t be called very calm right now.

After all, it was not his wish to return back to the Royal Spada Academy.

“In fact, I should be the one to apologise. I was the one that recommended you to go to Deadalus after all.”

In the first place, why had been Simon working as an adventurer in Alsace village?

That was a result of the conversation that took place between them here three months prior.

[“fumu, if you don’t have money then why not complete some quests?”]

Due to 'household circumstances', Simon wanted to take some distance from his family in Spada, the famous noble household of Bardiel.

Thus, even on Simon's guild card, the name Bardiel had not been inscribed.

With such reasons, Simon couldn't ask his family to get expenses for the school and other various expenses.

And at the same time, so as to stay out of his family's eyes, he decided to work in Deadalus which was a different country.

"No, I'm thankful to the chairwoman. It was me who wanted to go to Deadalus as an adventurer."

But, now that the situation had changed, he couldn't stay as an adventurer away from Spada.

That was the effect of the strong pressure of the Bardiel House, no, to be exact his elder sister Emelia.

"But, if you're here, I would be relieved as well. That human army won't be able to come to Spada after all."

In terms of relief, even Simon was the same who had fought against the Crusaders at Alsace.

Yes, even with that 'monster' in a woman's skin who all the adventurers together had been unable to touch would be unable to break through the Spada Army led by the [Sword King] Leonhart in the Gallahad Mountain fortress, he believed that as well.

Originally, Spada which had been expecting an invasion from the Dragon King Gaevinal had already put up perfect defensive measures against it.

Unlike the peace loving idiots of other city-states, their readiness was in a different level.

"Now then, will you start attending here from tomorrow?"

Simon affirmed. The preparations to start attending school had been already completed.

Although, like 3 months back, he'll have to move back into the dorms again.

“Well, this time you’ll get a lab as well so isn’t it fine?”

Well, it’s a bit rundown though, as Sofia continued, a question arose in Simon.

“Um, what kind of laboratory are you talking about?”

From the time Simon had admitted here, he hadn’t received any personal lab at all.

He continued with his alchemic research inside his small dorm room and sometimes borrowed other facilities while feeling ashamed to do some other experiments.

But, this was the case for not just Simon but for any student enrolled in the magic engineering course, it was a rare think to have a lab inside the school grounds. Only elites from big houses or geniuses with great grades possessed.

“From what I’ve heard, it’ll be a room from the old dorms. ‘That woman’ has already sent a large amount of money for it as well.”

“Ria-nee.....doing things on her own like that.....”

For any alchemist it was a great thing to get a personal lab, even for Simon, it was one of his dreams.

But it was, in the end, something that should be gained with your own hard work not something to be simply gifted by his elder sister, perfect in authority, assets, power, General Emilia Friedrich Bardiel.

“I’m expecting you to bring about ground-breaking developments for this school in the new environment you are being provided with, alright?”

“Yes, I’ll work hard.....”

And thus, giving words of farewell, Simon stood up from the giant sofa made of Bullhorn leather.

And when he was heading towards the white double doors to leave,

“Wait a minute.”

Sofia, who had closed in behind him without making even a single sound, put her hand wearing a white dress gloves on his shoulder.

“u, umm.....”

His whole body stiffened due to the overwhelming pressure being released by Sofia.

That was definitely not his misconception. Considering that she was once a rank 5 adventurer called the [Valkyrie Blizzard], it's obvious she could stop a small elf boy from moving with simply her presence.

Although, if she really wanted to intimidate him, Simon would have been lying on the ground flat without moving a bit by now.

“Won't you think about that thing with me once again?”

As Simon slowly turned, her charming body releasing incredible charm was there.

Compared to Emilia who had a big body as compared to the norm, Sofia seemed smaller but even then her height was still tall among women, and she was almost one full head taller than Simon.

Thus, directly in front of Simon was not Sofia's beautiful face but her deep cleavage that made one recall of the great rank 5 dungeon [Elgrand Canyon].

The smooth soft skin closing in on his face twisted his reasoning as a man and the sweet fragrance from her body made his heart forcibly beat faster.

“If it was me, I could provide you with a much better room than that rundown one, no, there will be no need for any grades or research result either, as long as you stay there.”

Caressing Simon's cheek with her finger, she raised his face to look towards her.

Sofia's crystal eyes looked into Simon's emerald eyes and their gazes intertwined.

Like before, her eyes looked languid but it held a charming radiance that tempted men.

No, even Simon, a mere student, could understand that she was 'tempting and inviting him' as a man.

Not just that bewitching attitude, the first time they met, she had even asked him this directly.

"You, won't you stop your alchemy and become mine?"

And the answer to that remained the same even now.

"I, have no intention to stop alchemy....."

There was no way Simon, even if he belonged to the Bardiel family, didn't know what she, who had such a high status and authority, wanted from him.

He had no intention of becoming her treasured doll, even more so if that involved abandoning his alchemy.

In the first place, he was a failure as an elf, without incredible magic, and no manly charm like Kurono had, why would she be interested in him who looked like a never growing child always?

No, maybe that was the reason. Without magical energy, an Elf wouldn't mature and grow, she might be treating him as a rare animal.

In any case, there was no way Simon, who admired true and proper love, would accept such kind of feelings from her.

And, now that he knew of a woman who had used her own life to protect him, he would definitely not accept such half-assed feelings.

"fufu, well that's fine. When you get troubled by that overprotective older sister of yours, come rely on me."

But she, who didn't know what was going on in Simon's heart, released him after laughing lightly.

"Thank you, very much."

He did feel a debt of gratitude towards Sofia who had helped him in running away from his family and sister.

But he wouldn't accept becoming a pet just for that.

He had resolved to return that favour in the form school merits.

As Simon gave his gratitude with mixed feelings, without realising that his face had become red due to her incredible charm, quickly left the room as if running away.



Chapter 180 - Rank 2 Quest

The mossy stone passage was so narrow that not even two people could walk properly side-by-side each other.

There was no light as there were no windows, and the airtight passage gave a somewhat suffocating feeling but it was only obvious as this passage was a part of a building that was underground.

If Lily's light ball would disappear, this place would be completely drowned in the depths of darkness.

This place was one of the danger rank 3 dungeons, [Revival Catacomb].

The monsters that live here are mainly Skeletons, ghouls, and other undead type monsters.

Just as the name of the dungeon suggests, any living being that died here 'revives' with false life energy as an undead.

Of course, since no magic that can fully resurrect someone exists, the revived undeads hold neither will nor memories.

That's because, the ultimate part of one's existence, the [soul], disappears from this world the moment one dies, so a person won't revert back to his own self just because his body became able to move again.

This underground tomb that was converted into an evil dungeon because it was overrun by undeads was now only used as a graveyard by those insane necromancers.

"Say, this might be my imagination but isn't this heading deeper and deeper as we continue?"(kuro no)

We [Element Master] that became rank 2 just recently are currently completing a quest needed to get our next rank up.

Is what I said but the subjugation of 20 skeleton soldiers, which is our objective, and the proof of subjugation [imitation heart]; we already have collected 40 of them and have clearly completed our quota but,

"What a coincidence, I was thinking the same thing."(Fiona)

We were supposed to be heading back up to return but I feel like the reverse is happening right now.

“Nee, Kurono, look.”(lily)

“nn?”

Lily who was wandering around my legs was picking up something round shaped from the dirty mossy ground.

On looking closely, it was a core of a slime that we had defeated while heading into the dungeon.

As Lily dropped it, the round core rolled away near our feet towards where we were heading.

“Clearly, it’s sloped downwards.....”(kurono)

Thanks to this experiment, it was proved that this passage was further heading deeper inside this dangerous dungeon.

“Should we go back?”(Fiona)

“un, we need to confirm whether there’s any stairs heading up from the room at the end of this passage as well.”(kurono)

That’s true. As Fiona replied that, we started walking once again.

Now that I think about it, all the excitement and tension of going into a dungeon I had before had begun to descend just like this dark gloomy passage.

It’s obvious but there was no treasure lying around here and there, in the first place, there was no tasteful thing like treasure boxes here either.

From what I heard, in some dungeons where the system of the Ancient Ruins was still working, through what unimaginable theory, weapons and magic items were periodically generated apparently.

But right now, in this [Revival Catacomb], there’s no such dreamlike perpetual motion system that exists and it’s only an impure place where undeads and monsters keep on being born.

Thus, there were only walking corpses and other undead type monsters here and was made of the same unchanging passages of stone.

It kind of reminds me of that white facility so I feel depressed when comparing this to being inside that forest.

While praying to find the exit quickly, we silently kept on walking till the end of the passage.

.

.

.

At the end of the passage was a large dome-shaped open space which was the biggest open space I've seen in this dungeon except for the entrance lobby on the first floor.

It's diameter seemed about 40m and looked like a gym, no, though I haven't seen one but maybe it's a dance hall?

But still, I could only overlap this place with that hall where those maneuvering experiments took place. Even the wideness is almost the same.

Well, leaving my personal impressions aside, after looking around, it seems that this hall acts like a crossroads of passages inside the dungeon.

On the opposite of the passage we came through, another passage of the same size was continuing. And on both sides, 2 even bigger passages were present.

What's important here is that the passage on the right was a descending staircase and the passage on the left had an ascending staircase.

"Alright, looks like we can go back with that."(kuroono)

I doubt those stairs would take us directly to the exit but it still will bring us closer to the exit.

Without any hesitation, we stepped into the hall and started to move towards the ascending stairs but,

GOGOGO——.

A sound like that of stone hitting stone began resounding from all 360 degrees of the hall.

Looking at the wall of the hall where Lily's light was barely reaching, apparently there were stone coffins lined up on the wall.

They were completely assimilated with the wall as if they were pieces of artwork so I hadn't realized till now but as expected, if the coffins began opening up while making a sound, I couldn't ignore it even if I wanted to.

"Sorry, I guess I made them wake up." (kurono)

From inside the coffins, skeleton soldiers that we had been defeating till now appeared.

Wearing black surcoats somewhat different from those of the Crusaders, and broken and chipped off armour and helmets, they were the undead soldiers rank 2 classified.

The weapons they held were curved scimitars and round shield sets. Some held tridents so that the narrow passages don't pose a problem, and maces. They had no sense of unity as if everyone picked up whatever weapon they liked.

"What should we do?" (Fiona)

In front of this lineup, Fiona asked me that but honestly speaking, I'm fine with both either running or fighting.

If we fight then we get more reward, and if we run then we can get out of this gloomy dungeon as faster.

Should we earn as much as we can? No, here we should quickly finish up the quests for rank up, right?

Then, let's run, the moment I was going to say that, footsteps began resounding from the staircase to which we were about to run to and dark brown giant figure appeared.

"What the heck is that? I'm seeing that for the first time." (kurono)

Is what I asked but, this monster with a cow's head and a human-like body could only be a minotaur.

This figure that was making *bumoo* sounds from its nose had its fur peeled off at some parts and even some parts of its cranium was visible. Also, it's right eye was hanging out.

This kind of damage was the same for the rest of its body as well.

So basically, rather than a minotaur, it's more of a zombie?——

"It's a Minotaur Zombie."(Fiona)

"No special name, eh?"(kuroono)

It seems my prediction was right.

In any case, this Minotaur Zombie, even while rotting, was blocking our escape route with its huge body.

It's eyes that had lost the light of life had clearly captured us in its sight

It seemed to imply that it won't let us run away that easily.

"Can't be helped, we'll kill them."(kuroono)

"Roger that."(fiona)

"Un!"

Now then, though it's a pretty big area, if Lily's [Meteor Strike] or Fiona's [Aur Soleil] exploded here, we'll become part of the undeads as well definitely.

Let's be careful not to get too excited and use our full power.

I brought out the [Hararetsu] which seemed to close to evolving and the [Mithril Sword] that was good against such undead enemies from inside my shadow and took my stance.

It seems Lily and Fiona are also ready.

At the same time, the Skeleton soldier and the Minotaur zombie also started attacking enthusiastically.

“Let’s go!”

Against these undead enemies, I took one step forward as I fired myself up.



Chapter 181 - Element Master Vs. Undead Monsters

(POV 3rd person)

While raising a rumbling sound, the Minotaur Zombie's giant frame began rushing towards them with a bullfighting vigour but,

"Fiona, take care of that cow."(kurono)

—[Terra Wall Defan]—الجار لم منع واسع نطاق على صخرة"

With a quick simplified chant, Fiona stopped the Minotaur Zombie's charge with a wall of stone rising up from the floor.

With a sound of a great crash that reverberated all over the hall, its charge was easily stopped.

No, it didn't simply stop the charge. Just like how Fiona had once protected Lily to give her time to activate her DP, the wall reached the roof of the hall and had completely confined the Minotaur zombie inside it.

The ranging sounds of the mad bull came from the other side but for a minotaur that only had simple physical strength as a characteristic even after becoming an undead, it'll have to wait till the effect of the defensive magic decreases before it could escape from there.

That time is not more than a few minutes but,

"I'll take care of the skeletons."(kurono)

It was more than enough time for Kurono to send all these 20 skeleton soldiers back to the netherworld.

"Magic Bullet Arts, Full Burst."

The black bullets fired simultaneously were not the usual full metal jacket bullets, but were Shot Shell bullet types which were 1 size bigger and the tip was flat.

Since the skeletons were literally just bones, there was no flesh which could be pierced through.

Thus, for attacking them physically, rather than slashing with a sword or thrusting with a spear, a strong blow with a mace or hammer was more effective.

The pseudo Full Metal Jacket has a pointed tip and is thus effective in only piercing power but with a bullet that has a big flat tip, it should be more effective in smashing the bones.

And the massive amounts of Shot shell bullets fired by Kurono rushed towards the swarm of skeletons that was charging towards him.

The power of these bullets had already been proved in the previous battles with skeleton soldiers.

Those without any kind of shields had neither the means to defend against nor the reflexive speed to evade these small, hammer-like bullets.

As a result, with a cracking sound, dirty white bone fragments were scattered all over and the false life force inside them disappeared.

And the lucky 'survivors' that had been able to dodge this hail of bullets were met with an attack from Kurono wielding two black and white blades.

"Kuronagi."

Those who had survived with the help of their round shields, those who had been hit only a few times and had lost only parts of their arms or legs, and those who had been protected due to their allies ending up acting as a shield for them; all of them were cut apart by a slash of the cursed blade that had a dark red aura much more sinister than the undeads themselves.

It was common sense for even a rank 1 adventurer that slashing attacks were less effective on skeletons but depending on the weapon equipped and the martial art used, that fact could be easily overturned.

The hatchet that could cut through steel even before evolving once, it wouldn't be stopped by mere skeletons with no means of defending even without the use of any martial arts..

"haa——"

Just after using Kuronagi, Kurono rolled and dodged the blade of a skeleton that came to attack as if it was normal and counter attacked with the holy white blade in his other hand.

In terms of pure sharpness, it was one level lower than [HaraRetsu] which had evolved once but due to the dense white magical energy stored inside the [Mithril Sword], it held purification powers able to drive away darkness.

That means, for undeads that use dark magical energy as a source of their life force, it was not just a simple weakness, it was a deadly poison that could kill them with a single touch.

The white slash created by kurono's strong swing tore apart the skeleton as if it was cutting through paper.

("Yeah, it seems [HaraRetsu] really doesn't like the 'taste' of these skeletons.")

Evading the incoming slashes and cutting through the skeletons with single slashes, Kurono was thinking of such things.

("I guess, it's because skeletons don't really bleed.")

The hatchet was showing signs of evolution during the time he went on Goblin subjugation alone so Kurono had been trying hard to make it evolve as fast as possible.

This was Kurono's personal conjecture but maybe thanks to drinking lots of Crusader blood during the battle at Alsace and also able to taste, even if slightly, the blood of an existence as high quality as an Apostle, it had become instantly closer to evolving again.

When Kurono held the hatchet for the first time after the fight with Ai, its magical energy seemed to violently astir as if wanting more power so Kurono considered this to be the sign that it was going to evolve again.

And expecting another evolution, he had been swinging about the hatchet only while purposely not using Sword Arts but it had proved quite useless especially in this [Revival Catacomb].

("Can't be helped, I'll hope for it next time.")

As he gave up here, he also seemed to be impressed by the Mithril Sword in his other hand which had been showing incredible ability.

"You are the last one!!"

The mace that the skeleton had put up to guard it was cut apart along with its head by the blade of the hatchet.

Without even able to make any scream, the skeleton's broken half fell on the ground and scattered.

"My bad, a few slipped through."(kuro no)

Turning back he called towards Fiona and Lily in the rear guard.

"It would be impossible to stop so many of them alone anyway."(Fiona)

In Fiona's surroundings who answered coolly, the remaining few soldiers were burning in rumbling flames.

It showed that other than physical blows and light, these skeletons were also weak to fire.

Thus, Fiona was able to take care of them easily with the flames of her [Custom FireBall] wand.

Since all of the skeletons were on fire, it seems there was no chance for Lily to use her light Extra magic.

Even though she's the one here who has the most effective magic against undeads; Kuro no wondered whether this was called being unwilling as he looked at Lily making a bored face.

Now then, let's collect the [imitation Hearts] and get out of here, is what Kuro no was thinking but,

DOZUN! DOZUNN!!

Due to the loud violent sound coming from the other side of the stone wall, he once again remembered the existence of that Boss-like monster.

"Isn't it about time he gets out of there?"(kuro no)

"Yeah."(Fiona)

As if it had been waiting for this conversation to happen, the Minotaur Zombie's giant arm smashed through the stone wall.

It seems the [Terra Wall Defan] lost its power with time and the Minotaur's strong arm, even if rotting, was slowly scraping and destroying away the wall bit by bit.

As it begins to crumble, soon a hole enough for it to jump out would be created.

It had been in an excited state from the very start but it seemed to have become even more ferocious due to being confined in stone and was delayed from its prey.

"I guess it'll be a bit tough to beat this one with just swords——"(kuroono)

Kurono had not fought against a Minotaur during the maneuvering experiments but he did face a similar one-eyed giant monster called Cyclops.

Though they didn't have any special Extra magic, such giant bodied, absolute power-type monsters were tough in general.

He did have a Mithril Sword which was its weakness so it'll be much easier from back then when he had to fight unarmed but the experience of winning after getting half-killed himself made Kurono feel cautious naturally.

"——Let's go."

Saying that, he tried to move but before that,

"uh, eeeiii!!"

"Eh, wai, Lily!?!"

Lily beat him to the punch.

After entering this dungeon, Lily had been doing the easy job of lighting the whole place so she must have been accumulating up a lot of frustration till now.

No, it's not like Kurono had been ignoring Lily, it was simply that Kurono was more than enough for a swarm of mere skeletons and Fiona would take care of the ones who were able to escape towards the rear guard.

It was simply that no enemy had appeared where Lily actually had the need to take part in the battle.

But something like that didn't matter to the child Lily. It was a fact that this had become a boring dungeon exploration for her.

Kurono who guessed Lily's current state of mind gave an apology to her in his mind and at the same time,

"Farewell Minotaur, sorry I couldn't take you on myself."(kurono)

After confirming that a magic circle of light was created over the minotaur, Kurono realized that the battle was over.

Before the Minotaur could begin its charge, the dazzling pillar of light swallowed up its rotting body.

A flash, shockwave, and explosive sound——the aftermath of Lily's violent Extra magic reached him.

As it calmed down, there was only dust remaining that flew up due to the attack and a silence befitting a graveyard once again took over the hall.

"Kurono, Lily gave her best!"(lily)

Showing a smile like a child who helped with household chores, Lily approached Kurono with tottering steps.

"Yeah, you did well Lily!"(kurono)

Without showing any regret of being unable to fight the Minotaur, Kurono patted Lily's head and praised her like an adult.

"As expected of Lily-san."(Fiona)

Fiona, who read the atmosphere, also complimented her.

"ehehee"

As Lily twisted around embarrassed, Kurono's mood that had turned gloomy inside this dungeon also became warm.

Such a gentle atmosphere was,

BUMOOOAAAAA!!

Disturbed by the roar that came from within the cloud of dust.

“What, it was still alive?”(kuroono)

How can it be alive if it was an undead? But no one was here to retort that.

Rather than those trivial words, the fact that the Minotaur Zombie was still alive was more important.

Once again, making a thudding sound with its legs, the Minotaur appeared from inside the cloud of dust.

“There’s just bones…….”(kuroono)

Kuroono’s words were perfectly correct.

Even while rotting, the minotaur had an iron like thick skin but now there was not even a shadow of that appearance.

The two horns which were a part of bones were as it is and its whole body had also now become only skeletal.

But its size that made Kuroono look up to it was still intact and its arms, which were only thin bones now, were still giving off pressure that showed that its physical strength was still the same.

“It became a Minotaur Skeleton it seems.”(Fiona)

“Is this an evolution?”(kuroono)

“I wonder about that.”(Fiona)

After talking such useless things with Fiona, Kuroono took up the two weapons in his hands and once again faced the Minotaur which was now in skeleton form.

This time I’ll go, the moment he resolved that,

“EEEEIIIIII!!!”

Lily snapped.

He instinctively sensed that. It was obvious though considering the amount of displeasure her voice contained.

And, a magic circle even bigger than before appeared over the minotaur.

Rest was the same as before.

The Minotaur died.

“Kuroono, Lily gave her best!!” (lily)

The Minotaur didn’t revive again, Lily gave an aura wanting to be complimented for that.

“Yeah, you did well Lily.....” (kuroono)

While praying for the pitiful Minotaur inside his mind, the members Element Master once gain complimented Lily.

Chapter 182 - Rule of the Adventurers

The proof of subjugating skeletons, the [Imitation Heart] was certainly in the shape of a heart but it wasn't located in the left chest like a normal one.

It was located inside the cranium. It had a crystalline look like a slime core and gave off a fiery light which is why from the eye sockets of the skeleton, a weird light could be seen glowing inside.

Similarly, the [Imitation Heart] of the minotaur zombie was also in its head so I recovered that as well for proof of subjugating it.

We, after collecting the proof of killing 17 skeletons and 1 cow, once again began to climb the stairs, this time without any further hindrance.

"It's pretty long, eh?"(kurono)

After we began climbing we realized that it was a big spiral staircase continuing upwards.

Since the curves were easy and gentle, we couldn't see how long we'll need to keep on walking.

At least, after entering this dungeon, this is the biggest staircase we have seen.

At the same time, there was a chance that those dull skeletons might appear to attack from both sides like in the passages so we couldn't lower our guard either.

"nn."

"What happened?"(lily)

Lily walking beside me asked.

"I can hear sounds, there's someone fighting not far from here."(kurono)

It seems Lily and Fiona can't hear it yet but after walking a few more meters, those two became able to hear it as well.

"This is definitely the sound of fighting."(Fiona)

The sound of swords clashing and continuous explosions.

Probably, it must be a well-balanced party with both swordsmen and magicians.

And going by the level, the opponents must be skeletons.

“Now that I think about it, this is the first time we’ll run into other adventurers inside a dungeon right?”

“Is that so?”(fiona)

I affirmed. Well, the only other dungeon I and Lily had entered before was Fairy Garden and it was pretty much impossible to meet the few adventurers in the village inside that huge forest.

But, in this kind of dungeon that was much smaller than a natural field, coupled with the number of adventurers in Spada, it wouldn’t be weird to run into another adventurer party.

“I think, as per the rules of the adventurers, we’re supposed to not interfere right?”(kuroono)

“Yes, that’s right. It’ll be troublesome if we got into some kind of quarrel after all.”(Fiona)

It’d be fine if it was just a simple quarrel.

Considering the case where they are in battle, if we were to recklessly try and help them, there’s a chance that they might discreetly push the enemies on us and run away themselves. Truly, what you’d call MPK (Monster Player Killer).

There was no gratitude or morals here. When your own party was in life threatening danger, running away even at the cost of others was a very adventurer-like action.

Also, it could be said that the one who tried to help without thinking at all was responsible himself.

“Then, we’ll be ignoring them ‘kay?”(kuroono)

“Yes.”

“Yess!”

That said, in front of a party that is about to get annihilated, I doubt whether I'd be able to abandon them without feeling any guilt.

I'm sure, in front of dying adventurers, I'll end up remembering Vulcan and the others.

No, let's not think about that anymore. Waving my head, I began climbing the stairs again.

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The place where we climbed to was a hall with the same structure as the one from where we came.

Only, it was probably 2 size smaller than that one, I think.

And, inside this hall as expected, were adventurers who'd be the first party we meet here.

"Ah."

I ended up making a surprised sound.

"--nn?"

Responding to my voice, one of the adventurers looked towards us.

The battle seemed to be over before we reached here and currently they were collecting the [Imitation Hearts] from the skulls.

Among them, the one who looked towards me was a light armoured Werecat swordsman.

Even if they have hair, I still couldn't differentiate their faces but I could clearly recognise this one because of the giant sword he had.

No doubt, the sword this guy has is Vulcan's [Fang Sword], that means, he's, Jouto was it? A rank 3 adventurer.

"Oi."

While I was unintentionally focused on the sword, Jouto called towards me.

“You’re rank 1 right? Why the hell are you here?”

I wondered whether Jouto actually remembers me from the time at Modred Weapon shop but in any case, I don’t really care.

“No, we’re rank 2.”

“Seriously? Even though you’re an apprentice magician?”

I really should stop wearing this robe.....

No if I take off the robe, I won’t even look like an adventurer anymore and will be treated as a normal citizen.

“Well, by the looks of it, you just became a rank 2 recently right? Don’t get over confident and go too deep inside alright?”

Whether it was sarcasm or a warning as a senpai, I couldn’t make out the intent behind it.

Going by this guys mood, it’s probably the former but I’m not stupid enough to get angry from something like that.

“We’re returning right now, we won’t be going any deeper.”(kuroono)

“That so? Well you were lucky, the floor from which you just came up from——“

–Jouto pointed towards the staircase like they were descending to hell itself.

“——even a Minotaur Zombie can appear there. A rank 2 won’t be able to deal with something like that. Don’t get cocky just because you rank upped and go and challenge it ‘kay?”

Jouto grinning in a mean manner but the fact that he still warned us about the Minotaur Zombie, means that he was still giving us a warning in his own way as well I guess.

“Thanks for the warning.”(kuroono)

Well it wasn’t something that required an honest thanks from me so I just curtly gave a thanks and passed through the hall.

From behind, “hey, stop talking to newbies and come and help us already!” A voice of the woman that had called him back at the weapon shop as well came.

At that time I didn’t see her but seeing her now I could only feel a bit surprised.

That’s because she was a Lamia.

Unintentionally, I thought of Aten. Maybe, their whole party has the same composition as [Irz Bladers]? Is what I thought but only these two had the same race.

The others were 2 Cleric Goblins and a Gargoyle archer. A total 5 man party.

I didn’t know who the leader was but Jouto was a swordsman and the Lamia woman was also holding 2 scimitars and was also a swordswoman.

The similar looking 2 Goblins were wearing a white robe different from normal magicians that looked somewhat similar to the robe those Priests from Crusaders wore and also had wooden curved staves so I could instantly tell that they were clerics.

The Gargoyle had bat like wings on its back. I saw one for the first time here and they look like a mix between a goblin and an ogre since he’s equipped with a bow he looked like a normal adventurer.

The number of humans in Spada was in majority so their party composition should be considered rare, I think.

But since the image in my head of Daedalus, where other races were more, is stronger, thinking of them like that of the Adventurer alliance, I only felt a bit calmer.

Now that I think about it, even Vulcan would want his sword to once again be swung in action in the hands of another adventurer next.

While holding such sentimental thoughts, we left that place.

Chapter 183 - Let's Go to School

Today, the month changed and now it was the 8th month, the month of Kouen.(T/N:Red flame)

Underneath the sweltering heat from the bright sun at the height of summer, I was walking through the streets of Spada, which I had gotten slightly used to, while wearing the stuffy apprentice magician robe.

The destination was the Royal Spada Academy, the biggest in Spada, and the most famous academy even among all the central City-states of the continent.

But no matter how famous it was, for me who hasn't spent even a month after coming here, I knew nothing about it except the name.

Now then, as to why I was heading towards this school, we'll have to go back to yesterday evening after we came back from [Revival Catacomb] after completing our quest.

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"We were lucky that that the reward for subjugating that cow was more than we thought. Maybe we should go eat something nice tomorrow."(Kurono)

"Yes, let's do that definitely."(Fiona)

Because the reward received from the Minotaur Zombie that Lily instantly killed was more than we thought, while seeing Fiona getting excited during our conversation, we entered through the door to the inn. Soon after that,

"Kurono-sama, we have a letter for you. Here."

I was handed a letter by the werecat employee same as before.

Taking it while giving my thanks, I quickly looked at the contents.

"Is it from Simon-san?"(Fiona)

"Yeah."

The sender was as expected. As for its contents,

“What is written?” (Fiona)

“It seems things have calmed down on that side. Also, she wants to talk.” (Kuronon) (T/N: A reminder that Kuronon still doesn’t know that Simon is a man)

Well, basically that.

I had no reason to reject the invitation, in fact there was a mountain of things I wanted to ask Simon who was a resident of Spada.

And like that, I was currently going to meet Simon.

It seems Simon has started going back to school which she attended before due to various reasons and was currently living in the dorms away from his home. So, it was mentioned in the letter that I’ll have to go to the school directly when I come to meet Kuronon.

There was even an apology written in the letter for making me go all the way to come and meet her myself but after all I’m an adventurer, there was no guarantee when I’d return. Rather than wait for me indefinitely at the [Cat’s Tail], it was better for me to ask for Simon at school.

Also, I was interested in the Academy as well so in fact, I’m actually happy that I got a reason to confidently go inside and check it out.

By the way, I’m alone right now because,

“It’ll be easier to talk without me right?”

Lily showed such kind of concern.

I don’t think it was something that worrisome but if Simon is going to explain some personal circumstances, it’s true that it would be better for me to talk to him alone.

Also, it seems that both Lily and Fiona had some errands to run today as well.

They’ll prepare for the next quest at the same time as well so by work division, all of us were moving separately today.

While thinking that it felt slightly lonely walking alone, I started seeing more and more boys and girls in uniforms.

Realizing that I was getting closer to the school, I checked the few giant signboards to make sure and started walking again.

“Oo, holy shit it’s big.....”

The Royal Spada Academy, as I reached in front of its gate, those words naturally left my mouth.

Walls as splendid as the outer walls of Spada itself were spread and was much better decorated than at least the 3rd defensive wall.

Maybe symbolising some ancient heroes, on the right was the statue of a sword wielding soldier in a mantle and on the left was a statue of a female knight wearing full armour and equipped with a spear. At the base of both the statues, a flag representing the school’s emblem was also set.

The giant decorated double door main gate was wide open and a few meters inside a giant school building was standing.

In the centre a tall tower with who knows how many floors was standing and from there a 5 storey bilaterally symmetrical school building was spread.

It was much more magnificent than the high school I attended and looked like a great college, no, like a palace.

After coming to Spada, I am seeing such a great architectural structure for the first time.

If I was able to some day see the royal castle behind those walls actually, I might get the same impression then.

For the time being, let’s move inside the school grounds for now.

If I keep on standing here looking like an idiot for too long, I feel like the surrounding students will start looking at me like I am a country bumpkin.

But, in fact, I, who had started to treat this as a sightseeing tour and was having trouble hiding my excitement, finally went through the gate.

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After stepping inside the school grounds that was probably much bigger than even the largest college in Japan, I obviously decided to first head towards Simon's dorm.

So, I decided to ask for directions from the students, or so I wanted to do but.....how should I say this, the girls I called to were completely scared of me.

To think that my looks would have such an effect now, I really didn't expect that.

In Pandora continent where people talk naturally with frightening looking Orcs, there had been none who would be scared of me who clearly looked like a human.

But, here I got such a reaction.

The girls couldn't even look me in the eye and were squirming while looking below and were trying to somehow answer my question.

No, but seriously, this is troublesome. In addition to my scary looks, since I was nowadays always together with Fiona and Lily, I had completely lost any kind of antipathy towards girls of my same age which is my I ended up making such a stupid decision of trying to talk to these girls.

When I was still a high school student, I was still a pure boy who fidgeted while talking to just Shirasaki-san but due to the existence of Fiona who didn't mince matters and Lily who stays by my side like it was obvious, I must have become too used to having bishoujos around me.

Leaving aside whether it's a good thing or bad, calling out to girls so familiarly with my face should be really avoided.

Or rather, I should have simply tried talking to a guy in the first place.

While thinking that, thanks to the girl who showed me the way even while scared, I could get to my destination without hesitation.

And after walking for around 10mins from the main gate, while thinking that I should have arrived where Simon told me to, I was suddenly hit with an immense sense of Déjà Vu.

Remember carefully, yes, it was certainly——when I first met Simon, the day when I first visited her lab.

Led to a storage shed with the name of a lab, the sense of pity I felt for her back then.

I once again sensed that after reaching here.

That's because in front of me was,

“Could it be that she's living there?.....”

There was a shabby 2 storey building standing here which was so worn-out that it was impossible to think that this was in the same plot as those artistic buildings I saw just now.

It feels as if the lab at Alsace was simply expanded in size.

No, I doubt this one was built simply a large storage shed but there's no doubt that it's being currently treated as one.

Trying now to be too shocked by the raggedness of the building, I prayed to the self-proclaimed Goddess Mia hoping that this wasn't where Simon lived and once again checked the place mentioned in the letter.

“uwah, no doubt this is the one.”

While feeling pity for Simon who had to live in a tattered building like this as if she was the protagonist of some world famous theatre play, I faced the giant storage shed in front of me.

Chapter 184 - Operation Present

After Kurono had left, Lily and Fiona looked at each other in the guest room.

Since adventurers had no need for decorated furniture, the room only had a closet for holding items and a bed so, the two of them were currently sitting on the white sheet of the bed together peacefully.

Between the two of them, a mountain of gold coins was also shining.

“hee, so you really have a lot.”(lily)

Lily was in her child form but the expression on her face was more like a corrupt merchant who found a way to make a lot quick.

“No no, not as much as Lily-san.”(Fiona)

Fiona’s words, on the other hand, were like a worthless merchant trying to bribe someone but her expression was her usual sleepy one.

“This——“

Lily picked up a gold coin, which had a woman’s face on one side and a magic circle on the other, with her leaf-like small hands.

“——Syncrea gold coin, how much will it be worth in Klans?”(lily)

It was a gold coin earned by Fiona back in the Republic before she came here to Pandora.

Of course, this gold coin was being used only in the Arc continent and the now-captured Daedalus.

“We won’t know till we get it appraised but considering the mineral contents of the coin, 1 coin should get us around about 100,000 klan, I think.”(Fiona)

And she had accumulated hundreds of such gold coins right now.

The total amount would be in millions, it was not an amount a normal rank 2 adventurer would hold.

But, it was a fact that from within the spatial magic inside Fiona’s hat, gold coins came out in waves while making a jingling sound.

“What about Lily-san? It seems you have many other types of gold coins except Daedalus as well.”(Fiona)

Near Lily as well, a mountain of gold coins had been created.

But as Fiona said, included in that mountain of gold were not just Daedalus gold coin with the dragon emblem or the Spada gold coin with the sword and crown, but also many other gold coins in different shapes, designs and sizes.

There were even some that looked like those excavated from the Ancient Ruins as well.

“In just gold coins, I have lesser than you but if I include the various jewels and gems as well, I think I have the same amount or maybe even more.”(lily)

“By jewel, do you mean [Queen Beryl]?”(fiona)

As if! While saying that in a fed up expression, Lily made a small magic circle in mid air from which many emeralds shining like her own eyes fell out.

“If I actually sold [Queen Beryl], that alone would give us more than both your and my gold combined. I was talking about these ‘normal’ jewels, I have many more other than these as well.”(Lily)

Her attitude was as if it was normal to have so many jewels but probably only the highest class of nobles even in the upper stratum would have so many jewels as Lily.

“You did well collecting so much.”(Fiona)

“That’s my line.”(lily)

It seems both of them were surprised with the amount of valuables each other possessed.

“Even if I did seclude myself in the forest of Fairies, a lot of things happen when you have lived more than 30 years, you know?”

Her words made one realize her true age which didn’t match her appearance but after all, it was a fact.

For example, Kurono wasn't the first man Lily had saved inside that forest.

Or, many a times she saved merchants who got attacked on the highway by monsters as well.

"The child me was a softhearted person who helped people without thinking about gain or loss after all, I saved many people without thinking about the consequences."(lily)

Thanks to that, there was a time when she had almost been captured as a slave when she had saved a a vicious slave trader as well.

Of course, that slave trader ended up with a body that won't be able to do anything after that though.

"These things are what I got from saving those people. It was pretty useless to a fairy like me though."

Naturally, selling her miracle drug and rewards for helping the Irz village with monsters also got accumulated over the years as well.

Nodding to that, Lily urged Fiona to tell her side of the story.

"All this is what I've earned while working as a normal adventurer."(Fiona)

"Well, if you could kill salamanders while solo, I guess you would earn at least that much."(lily)

Lily didn't show much surprise but it was a fact that Fiona could be considered a top-class adventurer with that kind of achievements.

But, since she held the same level of ability and since she take into consideration of how humans valuation system, Lily didn't think really much of that.

In fact, Lily was thinking that if Fiona had an appetite suitable for a girl of her age, wouldn't her savings be double of the current one?

"Well with that much money, I guess we both could but at least one or two cursed weapon, right?"(Lily)

"That's true."(Fiona)

As both of them nodded, they put back the mountains of gold inside their respective dimension magic.

“But, I feel like we took a lot of time to get Kurono-san a present even though we both had so much money.”(Fiona)

“Well, there was no need till now. Also, Kurono’s the type who gets troubled instead of getting happy on receiving a costly present after all.”(lily)

Lily had this great of a fortune from the time she met Kurono.

Even while having enough money with which she could support a single man for his whole life, she didn’t buy anything for Kurono because she knew how Kurono would feel.

Even without using telepathy, she knew that Kurono didn’t like causing trouble or relying too much on others from just his speech and actions.

“I wasn’t really hiding it or anything but it was kind of difficult to tell Kurono-san that I have money.”(Fiona)

“Well Kurono’s working hard to earn money after all, but—-“

This was not a stage where they would stop because it was difficult to say.

Thinking back till now, Kurono never had a need for money as much as now.

While he was working as an adventurer in Irz, their income was enough for both of them to live on peacefully together.

Also, during the emergency quest due to invasion of Crusaders and the battle at Alsace, he had full support from the guild and the villages so Kurono barely had to spend his own money.

But, after the defeat against the Apostles, they needed more power as well as strong equipments.

To face the Crusaders who would definitely attack, they’ll need to prepare personally which will of course, cost money.

Presently, Kurono didn’t have any defensive armour suitable for his ability after losing his [Baphomet’s Embrace] and didn’t even have a magic wand, the main weapon for a magician.

Going by Kurono's current equipment, he wasn't a magician but a swordsman.

"Kurono needs money, enough money to get him equipment with which he could face those Apostles."(lily)

Of course, Kurono himself had the same objective which is why he was quickly trying to raise his rank.

Depending on the situation, he would even take a loan from them. They had such talks as well but they knew that Kurono wouldn't ask for a loan until he was close to starving.

"If we need equipment, the faster we get them the better."(lily)

Thus, Lily was about to use her savings for the past 30 years which had been untouched till now for Kurono.

"But, if we suddenly gift him presents worth hundred millions.....I wonder what Kurono-san will think."(Fiona)

Though not as much as Lily, Fiona had been seeing how Kurono took action after the formation of [Element Master].

She had realized that Kurono's mind set was like that of a middle-class family's housewife who worked at economising at everything.

At least, he wasn't like those nobles who wasted their wealth as if that was their duty and was not overly greedy for money like those from the slums either.

"That's true. Then let's go little by little. First let's give him a present for becoming rank 2 first."(lily)

"I see, he would accept if it is just two weapons right?"(Fiona)

She didn't say one probably because she was already thinking that lily would give one and she herself would give another as well.

"I'll ask this just in case but Fiona, are you really fine with spending more than 1,000,000 klan for someone else?"(lily)

Lily's manner of speaking was as if she was testing her but Fiona answered without taking any offense.

“If it was all of my savings, I might have hesitated but if it’s just half of it for Kurono-san, I don’t really mind. Also, this party can earn hundred million klan easily after all.” (Fiona)

With a satisfied smile, Lily jumped out from the bed.

“I see, then let’s quickly go and buy the present for Kurono.”(lily)



Chapter 185 - Simon Friedrich Bardiel

Without any unfortunate accidents, Simon came to greet me as soon as I opened that crumbling, worn-out door.

Then, the first thing Simon asked was,

“Huh, Onii-san, why is your left eye red?”

It was something that even I myself had forgotten about, the change in my appearance.

Leaving the detailed explanation about Mia’s Divine Protection etc aside for the time being, I first greeted him after meeting him after a long time.

“——sorry, I couldn’t meet you any sooner.”(simon)

As I greeted, Simon gave words of apology but,

“No, you had your own problems, right? Don’t worry about it.”

Giving a safe reply, I was trying to conceal my surprise at Simon’s current appearance.

That’s because Simon, who should be a girl, was wearing the boys uniform. (T/N: Kurono, you dense motherfucker!!)

After coming to Spada, I had seen a lot of students in the black blazer-type uniform of the academy so I was sure Simon would appear in the red tie and checked design skirts till I opened the door.

But even then for some reason, Simon was wearing slacks, what boys would wear.

Could it be that Simon was actually a guy?

True, this uniform does suit him and looking closely like this again, he does look like a bishonen in middle school.

And I had been unable to decide whether Simon was a guy or a girl when we first met as well after all.

No, wait, think again, Simon is an adventurer along with being a student. Then, it’s not impossible for Simon to fake his/her gender.

Due to the existence of magic and martial arts, there's no kind of discrimination due to gender but still, one would not be underestimated if the person was a man so I did hear that sometimes women would fake their gender.

Also, to not ask about anything regarding it was also a part of the rules and manners of adventurers like how they don't delve into the past of others.

Alright, I got it Simon, if you're faking your gender by wearing a guy's uniform then I'll accept that without a word!

After satisfying myself regarding the problem of Simon's gender, I concentrated back to the main topic.

"So you really are a student here, are you free right now?"(kurono)

It was the morning currently. In terms of high school, lunch break would start after two hours so students should be in class right now.

"It's fine. I still have many things to prepare for so I won't start attending classes until after 2-3 days."(simon)

Then it's fine. That means we can talk leisurely without any time constraints.

After entering Simon's room, just like that time, I sat on a chair and Simon on the bed.

This room wasn't overflowing with items like that storage shed laboratory, not yet at least.

A writing desk and a chair, a bed and closet; only the minimum required things had been set in here but I guess that'll change soon.

After all, the room Simon was using in Alsace's adventurer guild room was also filled with numerous things.

"For the time being, let's start with reporting each other's current situation, alright?"(kurono)

As Simon affirmed, I began to talk first.

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It's a common thing but there are many powerful nobles that exist in Spada.

Here, especially, the most influential are the 4 great noble houses.

One of them is the Bardiel household.

Their origin went to over 3000 years back, to the first and the strongest knight of the Ancient Demon King Mia Elrod, a person called Freesia Bardiel.

No, rather than a person, I guess I would have to call them as one the pillars of the [Black Gods] of Pandora.

[Dark Knight Freesia]'s DP was limited to only inside Spada but there were quite a lot of those who had received it so it could be called as a major God.

And, with this ancient great knight that climbed to the throne of Gods as an ancestor was the household of Bardiel.

But, whether they were actually the direct descendants, no, did they even have even a single drop of the same blood was unknown due to the 'Dark Ages' that exists between the Ancient era and the current era. Thus, there was no certain proof to that fact.

At least, the previous ancestors of the Bardiel family who built the household did claim that they were Freesia's direct descendants.

Considering that this self-proclamation was also an event that happened over 300 years back, surprisingly the weight of history increased and now presently, the Bardiel family held even more authority and power than ever.

And, Simon was invited to this family as an adopted child.

Thus, Simon's full name was Simon Friedrich Bardiel, a really exaggerated name with even a middle name.

"is, is that so....."(kurono)

After finishing my own report, I heard about the family situation of Simon whose elder sister was a general.

And this was the explanation I got.

But still, for someone like me who hadn't spent a year in this world let alone Spada, I couldn't really understand the greatness even if someone told me about nobles and such.

I really could only say, 'I see'.

"So, why was such a big noble working as an adventurer in a village like Alsace?"(kuroono)

Even with my knowledge of the modern world, I knew nobles would be high class people.

At least, I doubt they'd have a personality that'd allow them to do something dirty like collecting herbs.

"that's, umm, it'll take some time to tell though....."(simon)

"No, it's fine if you don't want to talk about it, alright?"(kuroono)

The manners of an adventurer, but, Simon shook her head.

"No, I want Onii-san to hear about it."

That made me happy. It seems she does have some trust in me.

If she says that much, then I'll also carefully hear what she has to say. Maybe, it might explain why Simon was dressing like this as well.

"I, from the time I was a child, wanted to be a knight of Spada."

That was probably the time, 10 yrs back when she was adopted into the family.

"The Bardiel household had produced numerous excellent knights till now also, Lia-nee---um, Emellia, it's the person that came to pick us up back then, do you remember?"

He asked me.

That black full plate armour that was even taller than me, there's no way I'd forget that incredible presence.

I see, so that person's name was Emellia.

“That person is a bit special even among the Elves and was incredibly strong already by the time I was adopted.”

At that Emellia was 12 yrs old, the youngest age at which one could enrol in the Royal Spada Academy , in easier terms, basically in 6th year of elementary school.

From that time onwards, she could easily destroy swarms of rank 1 monsters and with proper equipment, she was skilled enough to even take on a rank 3 monster alone.

Certainly, that’s a pretty fearsome elementary schooler.

“That’s why I admired strong knights even more, but——”(simon)

Simon’s face darkened a bit and he continued.

“I did not have that talent. Not just that, I didn’t have the ability even a normal elf would have.”

The Elf race was famous for having superior magical energy.

Thus, since battles mainly depend on magic, even while using martial arts, rather than physical ability enhancement, they specialise in enchanting their attacks with elemental attacks.

“It would have been fine if I simply didn’t have magical energy, but, I couldn’t even grow into a big body like Onii-san either. No matter how much training I did, I gained no muscle at all.”(simon)

Unlike Dwarves, Elves weren’t the type that gained lots of muscle, and even among them, Simon had a thin physique.

There were even humans that looked younger than their age, for example my dad (T/N: See prologue if you’ve forgotten how Kurono’s dad was like), but that was even more characteristic in elves.

I heard this now for the first time but Simon was actually 16 yrs old, only a year younger than me.

But, his appearance was of the same level as girl Lily, a child in middle school.

“But even then, I worked hard in both magic and martial arts.”(simon)

“Could it be, is that why you are so knowledgeable in magical methods and techniques?”

Simon nodded.

Alchemy was completely devoid of magic. If Simon had been learning that from the very start, he might have been able to make something like that ‘machinegun’ by now.

“I still remember techniques, chants, and magic circles and I can even read one part of ancient letters as well. But, no matter how matter how well my technique is, how good my chant is, how well drawn the magic circle was, I could never activate it without magical energy.”(simon)

Those who possess enough magical energy to activate magic, though it varied from race to race, but still, such people were definitely the minority.

Even among the elves that specialised in magic, that number would be a little more than half of the total.

As a normal person, it wasn’t necessary to use magic to live on but it was a fatal disadvantage for someone aiming to be a knight.

Even more so if he/she did not have the skill with a sword either.

“After coming to the Bardiel household, it took me 5 years before I finally realized that I would never be able to become a great knight from this family.”

It was then that Simon started learning alchemy which was unrelated to magic.

“I am an adopted child, I have three older brothers and one older sister, so I am lucky that I had a comfortable position unrelated to succeeding the family.”

If Simon had been adopted for the reason of succeeding the house, then it would have meant that he would have been unable to answer to the ‘expectations’ of the noble family of Bardiel.

“But at least I wanted to become independent enough so that I could return the favour to those who took me in and cared for me so I took admission in this academy and left the home at the same time.”

I see, and now she was here.

No wait, I still don't get why she was working as an adventurer.

"Ah, that's umm, it's a bit embarrassing but I wanted to pay for my school fees myself but my savings weren't enough also, I was too concentrated in my alchemy as well so.....ahaha it really is embarrassing!"(simon)

I, who was looking at Simon as her face went red till the tip of her pointed ears felt more embarrassed right now though.

As I faked a calm expression while summarizing what Simon had said till now, basically, to pay her school fees and to concentrate in alchemy, he took leave from the school and became an adventurer which was a convenient job.

At the same time, she had also taken permission from the current Bardiel family head, that is, her father as well.

But,

"Lia-nee, how should I say it, she's more stubborn and strict than even stepfather. That's why she had been harsh from the very start but after I gave the path of knight, she became even harsher and is always asking me to stop my alchemy. Even at the academy it took a lot of trouble to convince her to let me take the magic engineering course instead of management course. If I had told her about leaving school——"

I would be killed. So Simon decided to work in Deadalus outside of her sister's reach, Simon somehow said that half angry and half scared.

"I see. You really had it tough, or rather, you had quite a lot of complicated circumstances, huh."

I couldn't say anything more than that.

It's unfortunate to have to carry such family burdens but that's not something an outsider could easily point out like that.

It's just that the head of the family, her father, seems to be on good terms with her so the Bardiel house is still a proper home to her fortunately.

But still, to think there was such a discord with her sister.....

Completely different from my elder sister, Kurono Mana, who had looked after me since I was a child, I could only sympathize with Simon who didn't get such a gentle sister.

"If 'that thing' hadn't happened, I would still have been leisurely concentrating on alchemy in that storage shed in Alsace right now.."

"That thing, huh."

"Ah, sorry, I shouldn't have—"

Simon tried to smooth over while panicked, somehow, it seems I really made her considerate towards me.

"No, it's fine, it'll be a lie if I wasn't affected but I have already sorted out my feelings so you don't have to be so considerate of me."(kurono)

"I...see....."

Now that I recall, I still hadn't told Simon about how I met with the remaining villagers and also about the Divine Protection either.

It seems I made her worry so I should explain about my thoughts and other things in detail next.

After all, Simon also talked about things that she wouldn't have said to strangers.

Chapter 186 - Welcome to Fairy Tale!

(POV 3rd person)

A little deeper inside the main street was the Bar, Fairy Tale.

There was no hesitation in Lily's steps as she led Fiona there because that's the place where she had drunk through the night with Kurono.

"It seems to be flourishing more than I thought."

In front of the door of the shop that had the 'open' signboard, Lily said that. She was currently in her child form but her consciousness was the adult one.

But there was no need to bring out her consciousness if they'd come only to have a meal.

Then, it meant that they had another reason to come here.

"Is there something at this shop?" (Fiona)

"You'll know soon enough." (lily)

Saying just that, Lily opened the door of the shop.

"Welcome." (shopkeeper)

The interior was pretty small compared to a normal café cum bar.

More than two-thirds of the chairs were filled and considering that more than of them were of races other than human, it showed the type of customers this place had.

And so, even the employee that came towards Lily and Fiona with a perfect business smile was also not a human but a Fairy.

Probably because she was surprised at seeing a fairy living so normally inside human establishment, Fiona was curiously gazing at the small fairy in the apron dress.

Even in front of a being of the same race, Lily showed no signs of worry, in fact she spoke her business even before the waitress could open her mouth.

“Is the innermost seat open?”(lily)

“Have you made a reservation?”

The fairy was still smiling as usual but Lily clearly sensed a slight surprise from her.

“No, this is the first time I’ll be using the ‘inner’ side.”(lily)

Lily suddenly brought out 10,000 klan and gave it to the employee.

“I can request for it now, right?”(lily)

Since the fairy was only 30cm in height, she held the bag of gold coins under her arm and gave a smile.

“Yes, then let me guide you to your seat.”

.

.

.

The seat lily had asked for was certainly the innermost seat on the floor but it’s not like it was surrounded by some partition or in a separate private room.

Though it might be a bit difficult to see directly from the entrance, but structurally, it looked similar to every other seat on the floor.

“It’s a pretty amazing sound barrier they have put.”(Fiona)

But, Fiona had instantly sensed the anomaly the moment she sat beside Lily.

Though the sounds from outside could be heard, no sound would leak out from inside this barrier.

“It’s a seat meant to talk about things that shouldn’t be overheard, so it’s only obvious.”(lily)

Fiona soon realized what those who used this seat were looking for as soon as she saw Lily’s such normal attitude.

“An information broker, is it?”(Fiona)

Lily gave a small nod.

“You did well finding someone like that here.”

As its name suggests, an information broker sells info.

It wasn't rare for places like bars or inns where adventurers gather to also become places where info is sold. It was the same on both Arc and Pandora, Fiona thought.

“It was a full moon the last time I came here. I wouldn't have known if I was in my child form.”(lily)

But still, it wasn't easy to find it.

After all, nobody puts up a sign [Information Broker] boldly.

Normally, those wanting info above what is provided by guild seek for information brokers. They are usually used by skilled adventurers and usually reject newbie rank 1 adventurers as well.

Such information brokers are composed of a huge network of people who have been living in the city from a long time so only local adventurers are usually able to make use of them and outsiders aren't able to get into contact with them unless they are extremely sharp.

When Fiona was in the republic, she did use such informants time after time but, since she was weak at human communication, she didn't really like going to them.

“I'll just stay quiet and eat and leave all the negotiations to you.”(Fiona)

“Yes, you do that, no problem.”(lily)

It'll be troublesome if Fiona said something weird while not reading the atmosphere and displeased the other party.

Informants especially, have a habit of appraising the requester, so they might reject the request if they become suspicious of you.

“Lily-san, what will you order?”

Fiona had already forgotten about such things and was now focused on the menu.

“Let’s see—“(lily)

Lily was about to look at the menu but soon raised her head back.

“Sorry to have made you wait.”

That’s because the previous Fairy waitress had come back.

While shining a rainbow coloured light, the small Fairy descended on the table.

Her chignon styled hair and her round cute eyes were both the same colour as Lily, blond and green respectively.

Her appearance was like a doll that could move but that was something very natural for fairies and there would have been many in the fountain of light that looked exactly like her.

“So you’re the manager here?”(lily)

“Yes, but, you don’t seem too surprised at that.”

“fufu, it’s not that difficult to see that.”(lily)

To others, she would seem like a harmless cute waitress but that was not the case for Lily who held strong telepathic powers.

It would take some time and labour to see deep inside her psyche and thoughts but reading the outer layer of thoughts alone was enough to check that she wasn’t just the waitress.

At the same time, Lily had also come to know that she was acting like a maid because she liked it as a hobby.

“Welcome to Fairy Tale, I’m the one in charge of this store, my name is Karen. Pleased to make your acquaintance.”

“I’m Lily and this is Fiona from rank 2 adventurer party, [Element Master].”

“Sorry but can I give my order already?”(Fiona)

Shit, I should have fed her earlier, is what Lily thought but Karen gave a smile and listened to Fiona’s demand.

“Yes please, I’ll take your order first then.”

.

.

.

In the end, the dealing of information did not begin till Fiona's order had arrived.

Fiona alone had ordered numerous dishes so Lily would be fine as long as she ate a bit from what she ordered and only asked for some tea.

"I have both things I want to know and things I want you to investigate."(lily)

Lily quickly cut to the chase.

"A trusty weapon shop, item shop, and a skilled tailor. And also tell me about a place where we can buy horses."(lily)

"Lily-sama, this is the first time you have come to Spada, I see."(Karen)

From Lily's questions, she could infer that she wasn't well informed about Spada so this must be her first time coming here but Lily guessed that this Karen already knew more about them than that.

For example, we were one of the adventurers that escaped from Daedalus and had taken the emergency quest.

"For both weapons and items in Spada, Mordred Weapon Company is the most reliable. It has a store in both upper stratum and lower stratum as well after all."

"I see, so we can't expect for any better than that right now, is it?"(lily)

So you have already gone there once. Lily nodded to that and confirmed that they weren't so bif just for show.

"Other shops that I can recommend, I'll make a list and give it to you along with markings on a map."

"Thank you."

I'll also mark some good date spots as well, on those words, Lily ended up grinning while breaking her poker face.

It seems, she remembers her coming along with Kurono even though she was in her girl form, but it seems Karen had already realized that they were the same person.

In any case, with this info, they should be able to get a proper present for Kurono.

Not just that, since they were going to work as adventurers in Spada from here onwards, they'll be able to avoid going to poor shops and directly go to the recommended ones.

In Spada where there were a lot of people as well as shops, it would take a lot of labour to find a good shop normally.

That's why, people like Lily who first looked for informants to get such knowledge weren't really rare.

"Then next, do you know about a rank 1 adventurer called Simon?"(lily)

She hadn't talked to Kurono about this but when he had told that his sister was a general of the Spada army at Gallahad Mountains, Lily didn't have a really good feeling about it.

Probably Simon wasn't a normal adventurer but actually belonged to some great family or something.

If you get tied up with someone with a high social status, who knows what kind of trouble might come with it?

It might sound like exaggerating but Kurono and them did possess power more than a rank 4 adventurer, there's a good enough chance that someone might try and use them.

That was still in the realms of a wild idea but until they knew what kind of person Simon was, why was he working as an adventurer, Lily felt that there was a need to do a background check.

If they were lucky, she could get hold of some kind of weakness and stop them if they try to use Kurono.

As Lily held such expectations, Karen answered after a small gap.

"I don't know, is what I want to say but I can't hide anything from Lily-sama."(Karen)

“No, you shouldn’t hide things from not just me but anyone. Fairies don’t lie after all, right?”(lily)

So it seems that legend was really just a legend, so thought Fiona as she ate the giant sandwich.

“I’ll confirm this just in case but, name is Simon, Rank 1, Class alchemist, greyish hair and green eyed small elf, right?”(Karen)

“As expected of an information broker or is Simon simply that famous, which is it?”(lily)

Both actually, Karen replied with a smile rivalling Lily’s own.

“I want to know further detailed info about Simon, if possible, along with his family relations.”(lily)

“Very well, I’ll be able to give info on him immediately as well though.”

With the same movements as when Lily had entered the shop, she left a bag of gold coins on the table.

But, this time it was 50,000 klans.

“I want to know his recent actions and movements as well. Investigate that as well. At the same time, also get info about the Spada troops to which Simon’s elder sister belongs to as well. It’s fine even if that info is only general things that are commonly known.”(lily)

If she were to actually ask about confidential matters regarding the Spada army, she’ll have to pay upto hundred times of current amount. Of course, Lily didn’t need such info.

“I understand, I’ll complete my investigations within 3 days so please come again after that.”

Karen gave refreshing smile to which Lily also gave a bold smile and they shook each other’s small hands

“By the way Fiona,”(lily)

“Yes?”

“The bill for your food, pay it yourself.”(lily)

The bill will be 4700 klan, those words spoken by Karen resounded vainly in Fiona's ears.



Chapter 187 – About the School

On the fact, that I have already come to here, I decided to let Simon inform me about the Royal Spada Academy.

I am guided, while walking east and west in the whole huge land.

I understood this place not only has a splendid gate and school building, but also has various other institutions working.

There are, shops for weapons and items, workshops for blacksmiths, the manufactured products are also sold within the school.

Among all this, the thing which surprised me the most is, the existence of Coliseum.

The gladiators are popular within Spada, just like ancient rome, for that, many coliseums are established in the whole city, but for it to be even present in the school.

However, this coliseum is used for training or for events, rather than a coliseum it's more of an even space like that of a gymnasium.

Others are, a very large outdoor exercise field, infirmary wards instead of infirmary room, a library instead of library room, at any rate, the scale of buildings is really big.

If I went on to take the whole tour of school the day would get dark, so leaving the guiding, I took the explanation about the Academy itself.

「Originally, it was an Academy」

At that time it wasn't Royal, but a religious educational institution which enshrined gods.

Though not on the large scale as that of Cross Religion, the gods from various places are enshrined, and in a big city it's natural to find such shrines.

The transmission of knowledge was helped by religious organizations in this world too, so at first they were made as educational institutions for teaching the theology of gods and various other educations.

The first academy made in Spada, now is Spada Academy.

「However, almost 100 years ago it became Royal, and after that it started teaching other things than theology too, like other subjects, magic, martial skills, and techniques」

This Royal Spada Academy, on top is the part of young elites which bear the future of Spada, that's why they even accept a low-ranked adventurer like me inside, quite a big-hearted school.

Though, it isn't like I and an elite noble son of someone can take classes together.

Each and everyone is divided in courses based on their ability and status.

「It's better to not get close to the elite cadets, who knows what false charge will they put up, be careful of people wearing Red mantle!」

The elites Simon is warning to me in a harsh tone, are students who have been enrolled in the course with the highest status in school.

One cannot enroll in elite course, unless one competes for the first or second place in exams, and also has a good status.

But the problems come after enrolling, one cannot graduate unless they learn the subjects, magic, martial skills, and everything needed to be the centre of Spada army.

「They must considerable, for them to use magic and martial skills, both」

「Though, the weaker ones know the lower grade ones, and strong ones, from the time as student, know the high-grade ones」

Based on the characteristics of race and talent, it's extremely difficulty to learn the highest level magic and martial skills both.

Magic for Elf, martial skills for beast-people, a human without any special ability, can earn both to some extent.

Of course, humans too are probably influenced by the character and talent, so naturally they too are divided in classes like Magician and Warrior.

Though they learn both magic and martial skills, but just like Simon said, because of weak points there is a large difference between the two parties. Still, there is no change that it's great thing to learn both, and they also learn about subjects and whatnot, they really should be called elites.

「Next, the Knight and Civil courses with more peoples」

The Knight course, just like its name suggests, is for joining the Spada army, so the basic curriculum is same as that of elite course, it seems.

However, because it puts more emphasis on combat, and other subjects are not given emphasis, so learning both magic and martial skills is not regarded highly.

The Knight course is further divided in, Warriors and Magicians, everyone take their choices for learning more advanced martial skills or magic.

The division is somewhat like that of liberal arts and Sciences.

The Civil course, doesn't make a curriculum for entering Spada army, but for working as an government official, so it focuses more on study of subjects.

This Civil course gives me the image of a typical Japanese school.

Of course, it's mandatory to learn somewhat magic, because they would be trouble if they couldn't use the magic items used in work.

The magic item like that which performs updation of guild card, are spread as official supplies.

Incidentally, the Civil course not only sends to government offices, but also large guilds like Commerce Guild or Adventurer Guild.

That beautiful receptionist might also be an alumnus of Civil course.

「And, the course I'm enrolled in is magical engineering course」

From the engineering word, I can understand this course is a technology-based course which manufactures products.

The most famous ones are, blacksmiths who use magicite metal like mithril to make armors.

Manufacturing from not only metals but also materials of monsters into armors, is also the skill of these people.

Here they can learn the knowledge of engineering many things here like making furniture or daily necessities, or architectural skills.

Hearing all this, it's only natural Simon took alchemy in this course.

「I too took the exams of elite course, but naturally, I failed in practical skills」

For three consecutive years, that is, Simon says that making a sour expression, as though she has eaten a bitter bug, looks like those are quite terribly bad memories.

「Lia-nee still persuaded me to change into Elite course.....though, it's impossible for me」

fufu, I, who could only be yes-man to Simon who is expressing a dark laughter, feel like a useless bastard.

「And, for the last is Adventurer course」

This Adventurer course is more near to training institute rather than a school.

The other courses have a detailed curriculum for one year, but this adventurer course is also used by active adventurers, so they can take the lectures they want to at any time, this is quite a free class course.

The normal classes are of a year according to curriculum, but this adventurer course, just like the course of a person delivering morning newspaper, is of small period, that too of some several months.

Though one can graduate if earned required credits, but there are more cases in adventurer course, of people dropping out of school after taking classes they deemed as necessary.

「Novice adventurers do take the course seriously, but the ones with low education and good strength, leave as soon as they learn how to read characters. Among them, there also who seriously want to study, so there are various types in adventurer course」

「So that's the reason behind many older people wearing school uniform」
So the adults I saw in uniforms in the city and guild, are those who only take the classes they want to take.

Which reminds me, I, Lily and Fiona also fall in this category.

After all this time, I don't have any need to take lectures on how to deal with monsters, make camps, how to use guilds, like a novice adventurer.

But, I do want to know about this world's subjects, geography, history, and also about black gods.

「Yeah, I really should try going to school」

「Oh, Onii-san haven't you graduated from a military school at your home place?」

Eeh, what is that back-setting, did I ever say something like that?

「I thought you went to an army school, because Onii-san knows things that adventurers don't know like, speaking in formal language, reading and writing, knowing tactics, and using awesome black magic」

Is it different? Well, the answer is Yes, it is.

「Were you some magi's apprentice?」

「Nope, wrong」

「.....Then, Onii-san just where and how did you learn magic?」

Eyes of suspicion pierce into me.

Well, is it fine if I tell Simon that I'm an another worlder?

「No, it might be better tell you」

The disadvantage to me revealing it is only, me being treated as an insane person with no proof.

But, Simon understands the scientific knowledge I have, so she's the person who can easily believe me than others.

「I will tell at a place where no one else can hear」

「Ah, I see, Yeah, then how about going to the roof?」

Like that, we head towards the splendid main building that extends from the main entrance.

Chapters 188 – Things to do in School

Aiming for the roof of right wing of main building, I went up the stairs.

From its appearance, I thought only students with high status from the elite course could use the main building, but in truth, it wasn't like that, and we easily entered it.

The rooftop is always opened, so there was no reason to be blamed, and we can go up the stairs without any problem.

Apparently right now it is class times, so there are no students in this area. But during the lunch break after an hour, this place too would be filled with many students, weather too is good today.

While thinking that, I walk under the guidance of Simon and,

「We have a preceding visitor, eh」

「Looks like it」

On the rooftop, which I thought nobody would be present, there stood a single a student.

At a glance, he looks like a boy of same age, his hair is same as mine, black hair, it adds up the resemblance to my former classmates.

Maybe he was taking a nap, but noticing our presence, he sluggishly straightened his body, and languidly stood up.

He is wearing the same black blazer like Simon, but there is a red mantle waving from its shoulders.

I see, so this is an elite student, eh

「.....」

This elite student, maybe, had thought his nap got disturbed due us appearing and like that he started moving towards the door for leaving the roof.

I clearly see the face of student, who just now passed by me.

My first impression, quite a lady-killer he is.

I envied him, because if I had looked more like dad, not mom, then I would also be a handsome boy with neutral gender beauty.

No, though a handsome boy, but he's isn't much younger, his height is not like that of mine but it reaches 180 cms. He has slender tall stature, and his languid expression on face too looks somewhat elegant.

However, other than the beauty, I am more curious about his black hair and red eyes.

His black hair and red eyes are the same as Mia, at least, I still haven't seen any other person with those colors.

No, here are people with strange colors that can't be found on earth, like Fiona, so maybe people with red eyes black hair are not so rare.

Agreeing on self-hypothesis, I without keeping it in mind, I,

「Is that the so-called elite student?」

Casually ask Simon.

「Yeah, but that person is special even among the elite students」

「Is that so?」

I thought, it must be because he is a delinquent among the elite students, but the answer from Simon was far exceeding my expectations.

「Nero Julius Elrod, he is the first prince of 'the old demon king territory', Avalon」

Avalon is a big city-state adjacent to Spada.

Above all, the second name 'old demon king territory' is something I heard even when I was living in village of Irz.

The imperial empire created by the ancient demon king, Mia Elrod, is Elrod Empire, Avalon is its imperial capital.

In other words, the present city-state Avalon, is the legitimate successor state of ancient Elrod empire.

「By any chance, Mia Elrod and the guy from before are of same blood line?」

In that case, I can explain that he got those black hair red eyes due to genetic inheritance.

「Who knows, just like Bardiel, it is doubtful if the royalty of Avalon have the same blood as that of demon king」

「.....I see」

In that case, should I think it's a coincidence?

I try to hear more, but they all keep getting away from Mia's appearance, like the king of Avalon has black hair blue eyes, before that was blonde hair blue eyes.

Yeah, so this coincidentally happened to be same colors.

I have many curious question like, why some big like him from another country is commuting to this school, but before that,

「Well then, looks like there is no one, I will now tell about myself」

「Ah, Yeah, That's right」

I should speak about the fact of me being another worlder.

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.

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One day, I got summoned to this world, got turned into a guinea pig for human experiments, fortunately escaped from the laboratory, met with Lily, and Irz was destroyed, all that is my connection with crusaders till today.

「But, no matter how much I hate it, I can't possibly got to Arc continent and kill the people and destroy the laboratories. Ever since I got this left eye, I had thought——」

I gently touched the deep crimson left eye, from outer surface of eyelid.

「The current me, can only fight against the crusaders in front of me. If they invaded Spada, the many soldiers, no, it would be completely destroyed and once again people living life peacefully would die, in large numbers. I alone cannot protect all those people, but, if I didn't fight then I wouldn't be able to save even one person」

「Don't you ever think to run away? After all, this country isn't the one Onii-san was born in, the world, in the first place is different, it hasn't even been 1 year since you have come to this side, do you think it has that worth that you will fight with your life on line?」

Simon said, while facing downwards.

Run, eh, certainly I had thought about it, but I forgot about it three seconds later.

[ET: It is written as 3 steps later, but that it means seconds. This line relates with an old thinking, that airheaded people forget things in really short time. If it becomes a big problem, we people call it short-term memory loss]

「The only people I want to protect with my life on line, are Lily, Fiona and you, Simon」

Saying that, I get embarrassed, while hiding my embarrassment, I pat the head of Simon.

Strangely, without showing any resistance, I continued speaking while patting her head.

「But, I just can't forgive those crusaders bastards for doing what they want under the name of god. No matter how many hundreds of thousands of them are, no matter if apostles are there, I will still choose fighting rather than running, fortunately, I have 'power' to fight」

The power that those bastards gave me on their own.

Normally, I too would have had to kill the 'demon race' of Pandora like those experimental bodies lead by Cyprus, but I can turn the same power on them.

「Onii-san, is it because you're strong, that you don't fear fighting.....?」

While fixing her slightly disheveled ashen hair, Simon murmurs.

「Of course I'm scared of dying, but I'm more scared of losing someone important to me without doing anything. Don't those knights also fight because they have someone or something they want to protect?」

Among them, surely there might people who love fight like Vulcan, but saying that right now would be insensitive.

「I'm, scared of it」

A gust of wind blows on the roof.

The bangs of Simon flutter due to wind, and her emerald eyes can be seen. It, seemed like she could cry at any moment.

「During the fight in Alsace, I was desperate, so I didn't feel it. However, after I survived when Susu-san protected me, I have gotten scared of fighting」

Maybe she didn't want her expression to be shown, Simon faced away, and continued her words.

「Even I want to avenge the death of everyone by fighting the crusaders, I too want to save this country. I get scared thinking what if that white army came striking on this country, I still can't help but shiver thinking what if that monster which killed everyone appears!」

I couldn't find words to say to her.

The starting point for our fear is different in the first place, I have a tough body which won't be easily hurt, but Simon looks like a child and has a power exactly like that of a child.

Though we have tasted the pain of hell together, but I got power in short time, and Simon's training for power didn't bore fruit for a long time. So, I don't have words to say to her.

「.....Sorry, forget what I just said. I'm fine, I will fight again when crusaders attack Spada」

Saying that Simon turns back to me.

「No, it's fine」

「Eh?」

「You're an alchemist, then you don't need to fight, right?」

Simon makes a puzzled expression, having difficulty making out the meaning of my words.

But, without paying attention to it, I continue speaking.

「But Simon, you have the potential to kill the most crusaders that anyone else」

「Eh, what does that mean——」

「Won't you create a gun?」

Simon's eyes widened in shock, after finally knowing my intention.

This is, the other reason I came to talk to Simon today.

「Though we lost in Alsace, but the power of gun was demonstrated, right?」

Machine guns splendidly pulverized the attacks of infantrymen.

Using Yatarasu, Simon head-shotted many enemy magicians.

We would have more easy fight, if all the adventurer alliance had rifles and guns.

Though there are sturdy people like heavy knights through which bullets don't cross, but the main power of Crusaders is the enormous numbers.

「.....Mass production of gun」

「Not only this, If it's you, Simon, then it is possible to make even more weapons」

For example artilleries, land mines, it is possible to make the weapons which use gunpowder with some time.

Not only that, if we use magic instead of gunpowder, it is possible to even make a missile.

「The information about science & technology inside my head is not present in this world, though I don't know exactly detailed information, but Simon would be able to make it out」

That's right, this genius alchemist, will be able to make things near the original version, all based on my vague information, after all she made a gun on her own.

This girl has the brains to find the answers even with the slightest hints.

「You even have a new research laboratory, so how about it?」

「Hm.....Yes! That's right, I just have make a really awesome weapon!」

Right, you just have to leave everything to tough people like me who will fight at the front-lines.

「Well then, it is necessary to get research funds」

「Eh, Ah.....」

Simon has a face as though she just sobered up.

She is a poverty struck student, working as an adventurer to pay school expenses, it's not possible for her to get capital to make modern weapons.

「I will get that for you, by working」

「Eh, No that's not good!」

「Don't mind it, I'm not giving out pocket money to you, but this is investment, thinking that you will make weapons that will annihilate those bastards」

It is good to tell her, that right now, I don't have assets to invest large amount of money.

I'm still a rank 2 adventurer, I can't accept the quests that can help me make a killing.

However 『Element Master』 will easily get promoted to rank 4.

I don't know how much great rank 5 is, but rank 4 will give enough money, that I could even buy a big house in noble district.

「Yeah, I will work hard! I will live up to your expectations, Onii-san!」

Simon has her eyes blazing for doing research. It's good that she's in high-spirits.

「Ah, but right now, only Simon knows how to use a gun, so maybe you will have to fight as a sniper」

「Ehh, you say that now!？」

At any rate, the modern weapon development projected, Established!

「Simon's weapons will kill the crusaders, and defeating crusaders——」

A bullet wouldn't be able to pierce that white aura, no matter how many bullets are fired.

With the cannon balls in artilleries, it isn't possible to aim perfectly.

The weapons made for 'normal people' is not of any help against apostles having superhuman strength in their bodies.

「——That is my work」

That's why. I will 'personally' oppose apostles with power rivalling them.

There is a possibility to materialize the divine protection of Mia Elrod, above all Mia talked as though she knows about the apostles of white god. Mia's identity is still unknown, but currently this is the most probable one that I can think of.

「But, is that divine protection something you can trust?」

「It is still a possibility.....」

It hurts that I cannot affirm whether I will certainly get the divine protection or not.

Currently, I have no idea what the trial is, and there is no reason Crusaders will wait for me to get divine protection.

The uncertainty of divine protection, the unknown departure time of crusaders, I have a mountain of problems.

「More or less, my basic policy is to get power by fighting stronger monsters」

I'm not relying on divine protection only for power, I chose to increase the rank because I want to polish my power by fighting stronger monsters.

「Fighting them, that is going to be hard. I thought you will train to learn new magic or martial skills」

「Training, huh.....I didn't do anything other than practical fights during mobility experiments, so I never even thought about it」

Now that she said it, the way to get stronger is by training, right.

It might sound exaggerated, but a bullied child starts learning boxing for getting stronger, that is the right way to get stronger.

「Though you say training, I have no idea of what to do in that」

Do I have stand under a waterfall? No, that is for mental strength and won't help for power, right. [ET: seriously, what is this guy thinking. Lolololol]

「In that case, learn that in the school, right?」

I see, you're completely right.

Now that I think about it, I had talked to those two for going to school.

At that time, I was thinking to go to school for learning more about fundamental knowledge of this world.

「If I want to, then can I come to this school?」

From what I talked before, I couldn't get the detailed information of this school but a student is in front of me, I will easily get it.

「Yeah, there might type of people like Onii-san in the Adventurer course.」

「Are there other type of people too?」

In the first place, what sort of type am I?

「The novice adventurers, join the adventurer training school which tells each and everything from the start, rather than joining Adventurer course which only has a curriculum and doesn't tell that much」

I see, certainly I'm not a rookie adventurer, but in less than 3 months I have already reached rank 2.

「That's why, Onii-san wouldn't want to learn explanation of Guild or quests, so it will be better if you only take the classes of things you don't know」

Completely right, I'm thinking if this system was made specially for me.

「Just like I said before, there are more adventurer with power and no brains, so our school accepts them, here they can learn whatever they want to」

The dropping out of school without graduating after learning the things needed, is like a symbolic phenomenon.

And, the only place I can study while being an adventurer is this place only.

「By the way, how much will it take for enrolling?」

「I don't know the particulars, but the adventurer course is the most cheap course, you can earn the school expenses during school, like me, as for enrollment fees, minimum you should have around 100K klan」

100K, is this high or low.....yeah, when I was in Irz, it didn't even take a month to earn 100K klan, which in Daedalus currency is, 10 gold.

In that case, if a rank 1 adventurer can earn that much, then 100K is not that costly of an amount.

The most expensive things for adventurers is the equipments, let alone cursed weapons, even a normal sword costs 1000K klan.

「That's right.....I think I will try going to school」

「Yeah, it will be good!」

Simon approves it with a smile.

「Alright, after I become rank 3 after completing the currents quests, I will come here」

For sure, Lily and Fiona will also come with me, it is going to be a good interesting school life for me.

No doubt it is due to me having lingering affection for my high-school life which was suddenly interrupted.

Chapter 189 – Is this a mixed bath? No, it is a men's bath

From the afternoon, in the large storage room, no, in the new laboratory of Simon, the meeting revealing about the modern-science began.

Though, I only have knowledge on the high-schooler level, it is not possible for me to think on something that can be immediately made in this world.

For the time being, I told her about my world, more precisely about the modern-day Japan.

I didn't stop at just weapons like guns, but told about transportation methods like car, train, airplane, then went on to telecommunication means like radio, television, and mobile phone, and also told about computer. I couldn't know what kind of image would Simon, an another world inhabitant, would have about these devices, but she seemed to have piqued a really great interest in them.

However, the time doesn't forgive to keep on talking endlessly.

When I realized the sun was setting down, I decided to call it a day there.

But however, at the time of returning,

「It was quite hot today, there is even sweat, maybe I will enter the bath」
If Simon didn't say something like, I would've been back at inn.

「There is a bath!？」

「Eh, yes there is？」

Simon makes a eye filled with suspicion saying 'Did you not know', regarding my ignorance.

Of course, I don't know, the only things I know about this world, are limited to the things I had learned as an adventurer in a rural countryside area.

「There was no bath in Irz」

「There wasn't even one in Alsace too. Places like public bathhouse wouldn't be present unless there is a big city like Spada, only and unless a natural spring appears」

Spada, you rock! Here, a public bathhouse is present.....This is for the first time, I'm thinking it was good to come to Spada.

Why? Bath is the true heart of Japan, till now I have beared with the torture of wiping my body with wet towel, it's obvious I want to enter the bath. I want to immerse myself in the bathtub filled with hot water and just RELAX!

「Ah, err, then shall we go together?」

「Of course, what are we waiting for!」

At that time, Simon seemed like a healing goddess to me.

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After walking for about 5 minutes outside of school, there stood a public bathhouse, boldly standing out.

「I-It was in a place this recognisable.....」

I failed to notice it, no, I simply hadn't come in this area.

Still, I can only lament over the fact that I hadn't come to this area before.

A large building like this on the main street will catch my attention even if I don't like it, furthermore, due the fact I can read this world's letters, there is no way I would possibly not catch sight of this largely written 『Public Bathhouse』

「It is quite rowdy, even at this time」

The cloudless red dyed sky, informs the end of day

Even so, there are many people like humans and other races, going in and out of public bathhouse continuously.

「Spada has long running times even in night totally different from rural area, therefore many people come at this time too」

Simon, holding a bath towel and bath set under her arms, told me.

「Well then, let's enter fast」

「That's right」

While making my heart throb faster in expectation for the coming hyper-relax-time, I passed through the entrance of bathhouse which is two-leaf door.

In the front was an imposing watch stand, customers which entered like me, were paying the fees to the old lady standing there as a gatekeeper.

On the left was a door with the picture of a deformed man along with word 『Man』 written, on the right was the female version of it.

This place is like a lobby, there are some people here and there sitting on benches and drinking some sort of drink filled inside a cup. Seems like there isn't much difference in the public bathhouse of this world or of Earth.

「Bathing is of 300 klan, and talking a towel charges 50 klan」

Before I started searching for price list, Simon made a smart move and tells me.

I take out 350 klan, and head towards the watch stand along with Simon.

I pay the fees without a hitch, took the towel set, and head towards the men's bat for enjoying bath to my heart's content.

I open the sliding door, inside was the dressing room as if it's natural for it to be present there.

The scene of nude men walking towards the bathroom with towel in one hand looks exactly like that of public bathhouses of Japan.

But, because they all are adventurers, all have toned muscular bodies only. Not only that, there are also beast people and other races, it is filled with another world feeling.

It might be none of my concern, would it help the skeleton at all if they enter the bath?

While thinking such a ridiculous thing, I fling the apprentice magician robe in the undressing basket lined up on the shelves.

「But, this is not much different than Japan's bathhouses」

「Hmm, is that so」

「Yeah——」

Eh, What, I think I just heard a voice that shouldn't be present here.

「What happened, Onii-san?」

Looks like it's an auditory hallucination, I face the way voice came from

「W-Why are you here!?!」

And, there stood Simon, with half undressed shirt showing her white shoulders, as though it is natural.

What the! Here is without a doubt Men's bath, no matter if she likes to cross-dress a boy, this isn't the place she should actually come to.

No, was there some problem in diving the men's bath and women's bath?

No, or this place in the first place, a mixed-bath?

Now that I remember it, during Edo period there were mixed baths, so it might only be natural for it to be present—

「Eh, um.....Onii-san, you don't want to enter together with me?」

I don't know if Simon is trying to seduce me, but she said the line with a really cute expression.

Of course, her body is still half naked, its explosive power will blow my thought process to moon.

But, I'm not the boy who would nosebleed here, That's right, I can bear it if I want to.

「I-It's not the matter of wanting or not wanting, in fact this is men's bath, right?」

「Yeah, that's right.....」

So this really is men's bath, then even more, Simon shouldn't remain here.

「I don't what you're thinking, but quickly go to women's bath, this is not a place a girl should be in」

While mobilizing my rational power, I dress up the half-undressed shirt.

「It's me who doesn't get what you're thinking, why should I go to women's bath.....Eh, Onii-san did you.....」

Maybe she realized something, Simon looks at me with eyes widened from shock.

「Onii-san do you think of me.....as a girl?」

I couldn't get what you're saying.

What does it mean, did Simon by any chance think of me a girl?

No, even in this world, the way of differentiating male and female is same, It's easy to understand upon looking.

Recall it me, I did get Simon is female on the first glance I saw her.....Hm, huh, I perfectly remember that I had trouble differentiating Simon's gender. Furthermore, not even once, had Simon said her to be girl.

Then had I, on my own accord, thought Simon was a girl and had kept on thinking it?

「Simon.....are you a man?」

I timidly ask,

「!? Onii-san, you idiot! I'm a man, you can look at it!!」

Like hell I can understand it by looking, I can't say that, I just can't.

Her line is same as the one said by some self-proclaimed god, but yeah, here it was my fault.

「Sorry, I always thought you were a girl.....」

「I'm a man! Really, Onii-san is an idiot! Dimwit! Idioot!!」

I try to soother Simon who is pleasantly hitting my chest again and again in a cute manner, and I don't I need to tell how much time it took.

Also, the stares from surrounding did hurt.

I was sorry for creating a ruckus, but when I heard the words 「What, just a lover's quarrel」, I seriously wanted to fire Bullet Arts everywhere.

「.....I'm sorry」

「Uu.....It's fine, many people think I'm a girl many times.....」

Ah, so that is true.

But leaving it all that, let's have fun in the bath that got postponed.

Like that, I take off the white shirt, and Simon takes out his shirt,

「.....」

It's just that, it feels like that, when I see Simon taking out his clothes at a close distance that our shoulders can touch. It can't be helped, right?

Without noticing my irregular heartbeats, Simon takes off the clothes.

Taking off the shirt, there is no there thing to cover the upper part of body, and the naked body of Simon, who looks like a girl, appears in front of me.

Pale white skin, round shoulders, slim waist, as for chest, unless one knows he is a man, one would of him as a unfortunate girl with very less breasts.

Simon, without hesitating moved his hands to the belt holding up his slacks.

With a click the clasp is released, he then takes out the slacks without hesitation, this time the white legs appear.

As if natural, there is no body hair present on his body, not even leg hair.

Simon is now in just underpants, but I still haven't seen the proof of male gender.

Even theses trunks type underpants, look like squash bloomer to me, is Simon really a man?

Am I, by any chance, getting deceived?

But my conflict gets done in a second, after all, Simon has moved his hands on the underpants.

Gulp, I reflexively gulped, I am seeing the proof of male gender of Simon in next second.

「.....Simon」

「Eh, What?」

Simon faces me, in his hands a towel, and his body is stark-naked.

「No, nothing」

Yeah, there is nothing, because I have the seen as it is from my eyes.

Simon, though you're 'small', but you're without a doubt man.

*[ET: Don't worry, you're an ass**** Kurono, you do like cute guys too]*

「Come on, let's go」

「Ah, Yeah」

I too am now naked, completely ready to jump into bathtub.

No, I don't mean jumping literally.

「Simon, why are looking restless?」

I, after learning the truth have nothing to fear, and even my rationality has come back.

Simon is restless, no, maybe vigilant of something.

「Uh, err.....」

Simon becomes shy, stop it, I, who has learned the truth will have my heart wavered, from his back it doesn't look like he is man.

Even so, I can't ask him to show the front, no, above that I need Simon's explanation.

「Sometimes, people touch my butt, that's why I have be vigilant」

「I see.....you've got lot of troubles」

I realized, that it doesn't matter if it's a man or woman, as long it is a cute, everything is fine. This is the truth of world.

[ET: See, I told you guys above!!]

For the time being, I will take care of perverts who will try to molest Simon.

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At any rate, I reached back to inn in good mood, I even wanted to start humming.

The summer breeze on my hot body feels just great.

I was feeling so good, that on my way back, I even bought the rabbit ears attached kids robe for Lily, the one she liked.

The old lady was still the same stubborn witch, but showing my rank 2 guild card, she was somewhat impressed.

I'm grateful that she understands that I'm not some damn noble kid playing around.

Well, still she didn't give me a discount of even a single klan, and I had to purchase the robe for 37,000 klan.

Incidentally, I had thought this robe was made from a white rabbit, but when I heard it was made from the white Punpun living in snowy mountains, I got surprised and also consented to the fluffiness.

Like that, when I reached back to inn in high spirits with the white Punpun robe in one hand,

「Huh, Kurono-san, there is nothing for me?」

I totally forgot about her.

No, I think it's rude to ask for presents, but a sense of guilty swells up, upon seeing Fiona sending a jealousy filled gaze to Lily who is frolicking around white wearing white Pun-robe.

After apologizing, I promised Fiona, to treat her pudding at a later date.

When Element Master was formed, she asked for pudding, so it's natural to complete the promise now.

Incidentally, I have planed to use Simon's laboratory's kitchen, which is quite run-down.

That isn't some storage room, at first it was a dormitory, so there all equipments needed for living.

Setting it aside, I thought to tell Lily and Fiona about joining Royal Spada Academy upon reaching rank 3, but

「In truth, we both have prepared a present for Kurono-san, please take it」

I got an exciting surprise.

「Thank you, I will gladly take it」

But, I, at that time didn't knew the true surprise was the present these girls have prepared for me.



Chapter 190 – Hero and Angel

The Daedalus royal castle, from the topmost balcony present there, an unbroken view of Daedalus townscape could be seen.

That wasn't some capital of uncivilized demons as people from republic had thought, but was civilized and modernistic like the cities of humans.

There were two people standing in the balcony watching Daedalus grow dark slowly.

On one side was a small girl, on the other side was a large youth, both carry beautiful silver hair, at a glance they would seem like brother and sister.

However, there was no connection of blood between them, the word expressing their relationship would be 'work companions'.

The small girl was 7th Apostle Sariel, the large youth was 2nd Apostle Abel, both of them are transcendental beings rewarded with the divine protection of White God.

The warm welcome of him as an envoy sent by Pope had already been completed, the people also had been sent away, and Abel's masculine face was out without any need for hiding.

As 2nd Apostle Abel, he called out to Sariel, who had been standing silently.

「I have heard from Miss Misa, looks like you have had a lot of troubles.」

Though the tone was indifferent and somewhere cold, but it was, without a doubt, words of gratitude.

「Not at all」

Sariel said just that and looked at Abel with her deep crimson pair of eyes. On the other hand were the pair of black and blue eyes which seemed like night and day, the line of sight of both crossed just for a second.

「Her actions were clearly abuse of her power, I have strictly 'warned' her」 (Abel)

The person who can warn an Apostle could be another Apostle only. Sariel couldn't possibly know what sort of warning had the 『White Hero』 2nd Apostle Abel, given to her.

Even more because she hadn't gotten such a warning even once, as she had faithfully obeyed the orders of Church till now.

「I don't want another trouble of this sort, however, considering her personality, that can be a tough case」

Sariel saw Abel sighing as though to say *Good grief*.

Sariel suddenly thought that though Abel always kept an expressionless face and was also cool, calm and collected, but he had human emotion unlike herself.

「I think you already know it, Miss Misa thinks of you as a rival. Though it might be trouble for you, but I want you to keep a good relationship as Apostles」

「Yes」

There was nothing Sariel thought about Misa.

The ill feelings like troublesome or annoying were non-existent, though, good feelings too were non-existent.

「.....Maybe it was unnecessary advice for you」

「No, thank you very much for the advice, Sir Abel」

Perhaps he sensed that Sariel truly didn't think anything in her heart, so he said that, but Sariel could only take the meaning as stated.

「As for problems, Ai too has come here, right?」

「Yes, she visited here on 15th day of Hatsuhi Month」

The information he wouldn't have known from only the report of Misa, Sariel conveyed it along with the words of affirmation.

Abel didn't seem surprised,

「Is slipping past the defenses to come out of blue called as 'visiting'」

And stated as though he had seen Ai's actions, no, more probable he had experienced the same as Sariel.

Sariel had suspicions whether she could slip past the defenses of Elysion Cathedral, but she suddenly accepted it, because Ai too was loved by God, so it wouldn't be much of a work for her.

「What was she saying?」

「She requested to establish Guilds in Daedalus」

She asked for a normal request, eh, Abel muttered as though being impressed, but he had no way of knowing that she took actions for kissing Sariel after stating her request.

「Have you started the Guild?」

「Yes, for now the quests are only for outskirts of Daedalus, but in near future it would spread in the whole territory」

The mercenary squads which hired from Republic, were still employed as military force for next invasion, but there were some who were disbanded after the suppression of Daedalus territory.

They would have two choices, either stay on Pandora Continent, or return back to Republic, but they would choose the latter because there might be another war in this land.

It is because those type of people were present, there was no deficiency in numbers of adventurers.

Once the Adventurer Guild starts up, the number of people would naturally increase.

「I see, it's good to hear everything is alright, looks like it was alright to leave the supreme commander seat of Crusaders to you」

「Thank you very much」

There were whimsical people like Misa and Ai among the Apostles, so the people like Sariel were valuable.

Thinking that, the compliment by Abel wouldn't be an unnecessary compliment.

「Well then, let me get to the point」

These two ending up together by natural flow would be impossible.

The only reason they had removed the people to be alone meant they had something to talk which shouldn't be heard by others.

「This is the main reason I had come to Pandora Continent, so instead of telling Miss Sariel by letter, I had thought of telling it orally」

In other words, it meant that he didn't want the contents to be seen by her adjutant Liuchrome either.

Thought Abel hadn't said the disclosure is prohibited, but Sariel understood she had to keep the information inside her only.

「On 13th of Hatsuhi Month, I received an oracle saying 'A Demon King is going to be born」

The moment she heard those words, the face of a single man appeared inside the brain of Sariel.

It was the man with black eyes black hair, experiment number 49, Kurono Mao

Why Kurono appeared, the reason, even Sariel didn't knew.

Was it because his black appearance was similar to a Demon King? Or was it because he did deeds in Alsace which cause him to get name 'Devil'?

「I don't know what it exactly meant, but I think a person controlling the demons in Pandora Continent is going to appear, and so I have come here for scouting」

The oracle of White God don't ever explain themselves, it was the work of priests for interpreting what the god in actuality wanted.

Thought there's no proof that Abel's interpretation was correct, but considering the various possibilities, it was the most easy to understand. In that case, is the person who would 'control the demons in Pandora Continent', that Kurono?

「Of course, from the places I had gone there didn't seem to any person who would be a Demon King, so it is probable that Demon King would be born in this world as a child」

As for warning, she should inform about the man named Kurono, though there's no definite evidence, but she should have.

「.....Yes」

However, other than those words, no other words came out of Sariel's mouth.

The slight hesitation, the silence of a second, wasn't noticed by Abel, so he continued in a calm voice.

「If a Demon King really appears, then it would be Miss Sariel, you, who would make the first contact with it, and, that Demon King must be a great existence because he was informed of through an oracle. Just when we thought our work of conquering Pandora Continent would be easily done after repelling Daedalus army, has now gotten wrong. Take actions with vigilance」

「Yes」

After that, they both talked some more words, then Abel left the place.

「Kurono.....Maou」

[ET: It ain't his name. Maou = Demon King, Satan, Demon Lord. Mao (his name) = kind-hearted, lovable (his face doesn't look like that), strong, and truthful. In other words, Mao = pussy wimp who can't be cruel]

The image of Demon King, which every citizen of Republic holds, Sariel too holds it.

The sky shrouded with dark ominous clouds, a creepy castle standing in the dark night, and sitting on the throne positioned at top, a fiendish looking man waiting for Hero while laughing, that's the image.

After becoming an adult, they would laugh it off, saying such a Demon King couldn't possibly exist.

However, Sariel imagined the scene of Kurono sitting on throne, who was ordering army of demons to annihilate the Crusaders while laughing loudly. This was the first time she had felt her imagination to be abnormally real.

Kuro No Maou

- Volume 13 -

Roar of Red Rage

Chapter 191 – Magical Beast

Salamanders are also known as fire dragons, even among numerous monsters it is a representative-like, symbolic existence.

Salamander has no forelegs like a bird, but has hind-legs along with two wings, it has a figure like that of wyvern.

It has deep crimson colored scales, which seems like blazing fire, covering its body. Its two wings flap and dance in air, and its fangs and claws more sharp than average swords tear up the prey.

And its certain-kill dragon breath, which has the might of a high-level attack magic.

If people see its figure, abilities, they would be compelled to be awestruck and understand that it is one of the dragons which stands at the top of living beings.

Those salamanders have, here, in this Galahad Mountain Range's northern part's summit, set up a nest.

There is an ideal natural cave present for changing it into nest, most probably the salamanders living here for generations have been using it.

In addition, the most strongest one in this northern part of Galahad Mountain Range also has the right to use that place.

The users this time were without exception, salamanders which have larger stature compared to other salamanders.

Among the male and female, normally male has a big frame, but this couple both have big frames.

When facing the dragon like Salamander, these two were the most dangerous pair.

First they have two heads, have larger powerful bodies and power compared to normal salamanders, and have increased their guard because they are in the middle of raising their young ones who have already hatched from eggs, and the last point, the female is as strong as the male.

Taking all this in considerations, it becomes easily understandable that subjugating them would be more harder than a rank 4 quest for subjugating 1-headed normal salamander.

These two were the strongest individuals in the northern range of Galahad Mountain range, it was both affirmed by demons living in surroundings and even Spada Adventurer Guild, however,

SFX: Gaaaoooooooo!!

The moment that ferocious yell resonated within the cave, they were taken down from the throne of strongest being.

The cave acting as the nest for Salamanders, had scent of blood drifting inside, to the extent one would choke by sniffing.

Inside there was no the dragons who were strongest, but a ghastly cruel sight which can only be put up in one word 'Cruel Massacre'. Only the scene of massacre was spread.

The strong wings which danced in air were teared off with power, the children were lying on the floor teared here and there like a paper.

The jaw which was lined up with fangs which could crunch the prey, had been forcibly wrenched open and divided into two parts, the lacerations reached the middle of neck.

The strong tail which could even defeat other salamanders too was teared off from the roots, it can't be swung as a whip from now on.

The strong red dragon scales were smashed into pieces as though hit by hammer.

However the point to be surprised would be that the scales which even dragon breath can't scratch were melting and falling.

The two-headed were the same too, they were teared to shreds, smashed into pulp, it couldn't be identified who was male or who was female, their bodies only revealed the ghastly manner of death.

As for why something like this was happening, the answer is quite simple and easy to understand even for a monster.

That's right, it only meant that someone more stronger than the two-headed couple has appeared.

SFX: oo0000oo000oo000!!

Once again the yell resounds in the cave.

The source wasn't the already-dead salamanders, it was a magical beast completely different from a dragon.

At a glance it looked like a Gorilla, the scene of it walking on four legs while attaching front limbs on ground completely resembled a gorilla.

However, its height was like that of a monster, the overall height from arms to head crossed 6 metres, and its overall length from the head to the end of tail was more than ten-odd metres.

Compared to salamander, yeah it was small, compared to humans, they would both be classified as big-type monsters.

Its body has been tightened to the extreme limits, compared to that of a gorilla its body was lot more sharp, however the bulged muscles on the upper body would be like boasting its strength just like how minotaurus or cyclops do.

It has five fingers on hands, but the arms were so thick that they can't be compared to humans, gorilla or even minotaurus. It looked like the trunk of millennium years old tree.

Especially the right arm which was thicker than left, and it helped in supporting the strong power.

On the back of right hand a jewel like a 『Beryl』 was buried and was releasing bright red light, the tremendous magical power near it can be the only reason for the melting of salamanders scales.

It had the black hair, but around the neck, chest, and the arms are deep crimson colored hair as though the blazing flames have been put into a shape.

Even now the red hairs are flickering like a heat haze, the tail grown seemed like that of cow's tail and the red hair on the end seemed like a torch.

[ET: Why do I get the image of that one something from Pokemon when reading its tail got a torch?]

The magical beast walks forward while waving its creepy and prideful red hair, the place it was headed to was the place children of salamanders wailing *Kyu Kyuu*.

The reason they couldn't escape while wanting to wasn't because they froze up in fear, but the wings which can let them fly even if they are very young had been half-torn off.

With their hind-legs they could run faster than humans, but one side of them had been uprooted and they could only crawl even when using all their power.

Other ten too were being raised here, but they too half-killed by none other than this black and red magical beast.

In the first place, before the two-headed parents of them were killed, they already had their legs and wings torn off.

The moment the parents moved their eyes from children, the magical beast took the opportunity and half-killed every child, for it the work would've been too easy.

Of course, the parents noticed the violence of this intruder one second later, and attacked with heart full of rage.

And the situations arrive at the current time, in other words the children were made to see their parents getting killed in front of their eyes.

No one knows what the children of salamander, who don't have the intelligence like that of a human, had thought while seeing their parents getting killed.

But however, there's no doubt they would've felt fear seeing the magical beast coming towards them while they could only keep on wailing.

That scene was something a sadistic person would gleefully watch and trample on it, and thus, the magical beast laughed.

[ET: Oh no, I'm not much sadistic, though I feel pleasure in trampling every person in games!]

A sharp face like that of a face, but the face which was smiling gently, could only be seen as an extremely evil smile.

The long ears which seemed like the ears of rabbit, were wavering as though feeling really ecstatic.

The black eyes with red pupils was narrowed in pleasure, and took time in looking at the figures of children wailing.

Like that, after some time passed, it picked the head of one child who was crawling to run, and threw the child into its mouth.

Crunch crunch Not paying attention to scales and bones, it eats the whole body while the blood drips from the mouth.

Maybe it felt satisfied from the taste of salamander's meat, it raised a moan, and desperately tried to run here and there with its half-torn wing and legs. Then, it moves onto the next child.

The meal time got finished in less than 5 minutes, finally the only living being inside the cave became only the magical beast.

SFX: GaaooOooOOooOOooOO!!

The repulsive yell not only resounded in the cave but also went outside. It was to show that it was the new ruler of the mountain.

Before I go, this magical beast is a character that you all guys haven't read but you still know, and I wanted it to come fast. Now just wait for action, it's going to come in some chapters. Oh, that ain't normal action like fighting this beast or something like that, just wait and watch, err I mean read~

Chapter 192 – Genealogy of Demon King

I had always felt something ‘different’ from this world ever since I was a child.

I also think that the place I need to be is not this boring world but a different place.

However, I don’t know where that is, and it’s troublesome to go find on my own without any clues, is ridiculous, and I hate to waste my energy.

[ET: Hyouka anyone? Well this guy is more like me! and less like Oreki]

That’s why I, Nero Julius Elrod am ditching the boring needless class, and taking a nap on the roof of school.

「Sigh.....」

I sight while watching the endlessly stretching blue sky, boredom comes. But, this place is much better than the fucking royal place of that shitty Avalon.

It’s not like I wanted, but I got born in the fucking tremendous royal family of Avalon, the legitimate successor state of Elrod empire.

Let’s add spice, I am also the first in line to inherit the family, fuck that.

I’ve got no interest in becoming the king, after all then I would need to handle those shitty country level problems.

Even in this school life I am living, I have to deal with troublesome problems or get into accidents too. If I became the king, wouldn’t a world war start, no I’m being serious here.

I only want to live peacefully, want to evade troublesome situations, not stand-out, but the gods of Pandora don’t let me and I want to kick their asses one time, especially, the guy who rules over fate, I won’t stop with one kick.

Well, if becomes too peaceful then once again boredom kicks in, one can’t be satisfied with life easily.

「.....Hm?」

While thinking those ridiculous things, I sense presence of people.

It's not like I trained, but my five senses are better than a run-of-the-mill sort of person, thanks to this talent I had two times killed the assassins when I was a child, this is one great talent.

There are 2 signs of approaching, neither can I feel magical power nor hostility, they're simply moving forward and climbing the stairs.

Oh geez, I never thought someone else other than them can come here during class times, they're quite rude visitors that can't read atmosphere.

Even I have no intention of showing my sleeping face boldly to others, it would not be good if I got attacked, in both meanings.

Me getting up from the bench and the entry of the uninvited guests coincided.

I sent a fleeting glance, there stood a known face and unknown face, this is quite an odd couple with great difference in house.

The small one is Simon, a person from that Bardiel family, and is also a famous student so even I who can't remember names easily have remembered his guy's name.

He is the legendary man who gets full scores in written exams in every elite course examination but gets zero in the practical exams. It has been going on for 3 years already, really a laughable story.

In the fourth year he finally entered the Magical Engineering course, and the legend has finally come to an halt.

However if he can get more scores than me in written exams he could go into the Civil course and get an elite course there, but I can't understand the reason he entered the magical engineering even though he's not a dwarf. In the end, he is too much jumbled up for me to understand.

I heard that he left the school temporarily for raising funds for school fees, but from that uniform looks like he came back.

Well I only know the name and legend, and I don't have even the tiniest bit of interest in his circumstances.

I'm more curious about the tall man who is with Simon.

He is wearing a shitty thing like Magician Apprentice robe which even the freshmen don't wear now-a-days.

But, there is no opening in this man.

Even the instructors of this school can't possibly have no openings like him, he is without a doubt someone with lot of power and is hiding it.

[ET: No mate, only you can understand his value in Spada other than his companions]

At a glance he would seem like a magician due to the robe, but his body is supple and toned to the extent.

It's like he is bodyguard hired for Simon by the Bardiel family.

However, even more surprising things are his hair color and eye color.

The black hair and red eyes, are only found in the direct descendants of 1st Emperor of Elrod Empire, Mia Elrod, the demon king.

The people with black hair and red eyes both are quite rare in the royal family, mostly they get one, either black hair or red eyes.

This man, though one eyes is red, but he has the characteristics of black hair and red eye.

If he got that by coincidence then it must be miracle.

Thinking from the left black eye, then one of his parents might have black hair and black eyes like that of those foreigners.

[ET: Foreigners = Another Worlders = Earthlings = People like me and you = people struck by boredom]

And as for the other left eye, if he inherited some magical power then only he can have a red colored eye.

Well what, it's only somewhat rare, not something I have to think about.

Well half of the genealogy of Demon King is a rumour, neither does it has credibility, so upon searching there must be a person with black hair and red eyes, not like I had seen one before today, though.

Concluding like that, I, with sleepy eyes, left the roof because some intruders intruded my sleep.

The other side too must be thinking of me as an intruder, well then, what would that man and Simon do on this roof with no people, it's not like I have no interest.

I can maybe even scoop the time of legendary man Simon entering the world of adultery with same sex.

Maybe I should let the servant record it, and I will get really high money if I leaked it out, after all the other man with Simon, though his type is different, but he can be considered as a handsome guy.

Well those sharp glaring eyes may a subtraction point for many people.

I have lost an interesting chance, while thinking that I come down the stairs,

「Ah, you were ditching the classes by being on roof!」

and a voice I'm all-too well familiar with resounded in my ears.

「No, I'm not at the roof right now」

I'm on the stairs.

「These stairs lead to only roof, that means you were on the roof just before!」

He guessed the truth with his reasoning.

「Aren't you too ditching the classes, Charl, the classes are going on」

The girl wearing a red mantle the proof of elite cadet and is waving her red twin-tails is called Charlotte. In full name it is Charlotte Tristan Spada.

[ET: Name reminded me of Charlotte (anime)]

It's not like you won't understand even after hearing it, this girl a true princess, more precisely, third princess.

Well to me she is a lass who is a hard to please and has an inseparable relationship of childhood friends with me.

「Don't think of me the same as a delinquent like you, I have already completed my quota of Magic Circle Application II 」

More than half of time for classes is still left, she is excellent like always.

Her golden eyes and red hair is the same as her father 『Sword

King』 Leonhart, but unlike that monster of a father, her face is of a

beautiful girl, it's really good for you Charl that you got the face resembling your beautiful mother.

If you say my desire, I would've liked if her body was raised like that of female, like her mother, like the chest or bust.

Well then, there is no time to think about the part of girls can be called rude, if she sensed it, then she knows no restraint, and a kick would certainly fall into my face.

「So you finished first? Fast as always」

I want the kick in face to go in hell, so I change the subject to a safe topic.

「Unfortunately I'm 2nd」

Not being much depressed, Charl tells as if natural.

No matter how much pride Charl has, compared to him she too doesn't be conceited.

「It can't be helped with Safi being there」

「Yean, it couldn't be helped because of Safi」

Though she is necromance not a magician, she has learnt the model magic to perfection, that villain in glasses.

[ET: The same line people in log horizon use but here it's a woman]

Right now she might be shut-in her darkness filled laboratory while creating her new manservant.

「So the reason you came searching for me is for lunch?」

「That too, and also about the next quest!」

This princess is having too much sparkling eyes, Ah, please no, she has surely found some damn troublesome quest.

「Give me a break, we're already standing out as rank 4 adventurers with talent and whatnot」

At this pace, we would become rank 5 adventurers even before Charl's brother Eisenhart became.

Just by the royalties of Spada and Avalon combining in party is more than enough to stand out, now I don't need anymore spotlight.

I'm merely using Adventurer Guild for killing time instead of working as an adventurer to learn something.

「Don't worry about their jealousy or envy, we are we and don't care about the surroundings」

「Hmm, well you're right but.....」

Do you know princess who is the one who deals with those problems every time?

It's better to not say that, I'm not a super masochist who loves getting his ass beaten.

「Well okay, so what is the quest?」

「You have heard about the nest of salamanders, right?」

Of course, no matter how much appropriately we've been doing, after reaching rank 4, we obviously have heard the information about famous dungeons and places.

The nest of salamanders is the place in northern part of Galahad Mountain Range where every year the salamanders build a nest.

It is the cave in surroundings of summit, it is the ideal location for making nests, it seems.

The salamander who has gotten the first place leaving his same family behind means it must be the strongest.

So to say, it's like a natural dungeon like place where boss appears.

And it is the mostly recommended dangerous sport for jumping in the flames nest.

「Don't tell me.....」

「Yes that don't tell me , it is!」

Sigh, I heave a heavy sigh.

But, I don't know the magic to stop Charl after she has gotten this much interesting in something.

「Well alright, a two-headed salamander, we'll see it when time comes」

「This year's one is really big, so you too have to be serious about it!」

I hate getting serious it tires me out, and these guys will defeat it while I only need to do little support, please help me okay, get it, right?

「Then, let's quickly go to school cafeteria, we need to take the seats」

Charl starts running in the corridor while forcibly pulling my arm.

「Ah, Oii, geez.....it can't be helped, huh」

I am always manipulated by Charl.

But, when I'm with her talking like this, I don't feel the 'difference' in world, neither get bored, so even though, she does all troublesome things, I don't hate being with her.

Chapter 193 – Wing Road

The quest Charl took was,

Quest: Subjugate the couple 『Salamander』

Reward: 30 million klan, 10 million klan upon the subjugation of just one

Time limit: By the 1st of Blue Moon month.

Client: Adventurer Guild

Description: New salamanders have started acting in the 『Nest of salamander』. The couple this time are very big ones, rare to find in recent years ——(Rest omitted)

Exactly like what I had expected.

「In truth, one month ago a rank 4 party accepted the quest but had their tables turned, thanks to that we have the chance of getting the quest. We're lucky, right!」

What the....., damn clumsy party, salamanders are monsters living here since ancient times, so there are innumerable ways of defeating them, still they lost.

However, the 'big ones' should mean that they are unexpectedly very strong.

At any rate, they are still tiring and troublesome opponents, I'm not quite willing to accept it, but

「Ooo, I'm fired up! A man needs to fight a dragon, only that is worthy for a man!」

This muscle headed idiot, Kai, has become too fired up.

And I mean, don't get up from the damn chair and shout, the painful stares from everyone in dining hall hurt.

But well, an fight-loving idiot like Kai, would naturally want to take up the quest, after all salamanders are representatives of monsters, are quite strong compared to normal ones, and have defeated a rank 4 adventurers.

This man, Kai, though is saying completely foolish sentences, his full name is Kai Est Galbraith, the son from the one of the 4 Great Nobles, the Galbraith Family.

Furthermore he is the eldest son, yeah Galbraith family is doomed.

Or so I would like to think, but because they are a family lineage of Knights standing equally with Bardiel family, so if the person is strong then almost everything is OK to do.

Kai is lacking in magic, but as for the swordsmanship he has already reached first-class level, in a normal sword battle with me he can easily win, defeating me.

Including the top of his pointy golden hair, he can easily be of 2 metres tall, it's just as you think, this guy is a friggin giant strength-type person.

Thanks to that he swings the tremendously heavy long sword as though it is a baton, and has already learned many master class martial skills, his talent isn't something that should be as a student anymore.

Well, he can't use anything other than sword, so if I use magic on full power, it's easy to defeat him, in fact, if I don't defeat him then i can't continue being a close friend with him.

「You're really a stifling idiot.....worst, just go and die」

Cold stare and words strike at Kai who is still fired up even before the salamander subjugation and is standing from his seat.

The person who said is a slender beautiful girl with eerie violet long hair, the eyes behind her glasses are also the same violet which reminds me of some sort of deadly poison.

No, her eyes truly are 'deadly poison', if there were no glasses the nasty effect of 『Magical Eyes』 would've already attacked Kai.

In fact, a little effect is leaking from the sides of glasses and attacking Kai.

「Ouu」 Kai raises a groan and sits back quietly, you're good, keep on doing this thing.

「Eh, What, Safi, you're against it?」

As if the damage caused by friendly fire to Kai is not seen by her, Charl asks nonchalantly.

Safi is her nickname, even I say that.

So, the reply of that Safi-chan is,

「I'm in favor of quest itself, I can get new materials after all, really interesting」

FuFuFu, the sight of her revealing an eerie smile on her cold beautiful face seems like the witches that come out in fairy-tales.

But her true identity is not a witch, but something even more ominous, her class is the one which rules over the dead 『Necromancer』 , that is her, Safiel Maya Hydra's official class and identity.

The family of Hydra is the same as of Kai's family, in other words it too is one of the 4 Great Nobles.

Spears for Bardiel, Swords for Galbraith, every family has their special weapons, but Hydra family is well versed in magic, that is of course, not model magic but 『Necromancy』 .

Kai is a prodigy who has already learnt the swordsmanship needed to inherit the seat of head of the family, but compared among the prodigies Safi would be superior.

She knows 『Necromancy』 and also has learned model magic to a high level, furthermore she also has 『Magical Eyes』 for support.

These 『Magical Eyes』 can deploy an effect of some sort of magic upon seeing someone, this is one sly ability in the eyeballs.

It is possible to have them due to genetic hereditary, but the possibilities are really low.

But, well as you can see, this girl has magical eyes as if it's natural.

「Sigh, it's just a cheat」

I leak out that murmur unintentionally, but

「What do you mean cheat?」

Whoops, looks I said it out loud.

「You don't know, they are the underhanded tricks used when playing board games, or the person who uses them, for example, a dice which always gives 6」

Hmm, Safi consents to it while raising a tone not showing any admiration.

「So, who's the cheat? 」

「No, that was just me talking to myself.」

I evade while raising a smile and giving out a vague answer

Safi glares at my face for some second then moves her head away, looks like the threat of magical eyes has gone.

「So then Kai and Safi have agreed, so it's decided to take this quest!」

「Where's my say in this?」

「It's decided!!」

She is pushing through without hearing me.

Well there are 5 party members, now 3 have agreed to it, so I can't possibly make them not take the quest.

「Well it's fine with me, but have you clearly asked Nell?」

I speak the name of the last member who isn't present here.

「Yeah, I've already asked in the previous class」

Don't keep talking in the class, or so I thought to tell her, but that isn't a line someone like me, who ditches the classes, should say.

The class Charl was in before, Safi too was 『Magic Circle Application II』 , ah, no wonder that clumsy Nell is overworking right now.

「What did she say?」

「Naturally, she too agrees」

Sigh, I heave a sigh.

Nell, full name, Nell Julius Elrod, just like the name says, she's my little sister.

She is the only member lacking in fighting ability, that's why she feels inferior and so she never objects to anything.

Though I say fighting ability, Nell is a 『Priest』 so she doesn't need to have tremendous powers like we four have.

Though she has no spotlights in fights, but she can use Heal and Cure both, a rare talent, furthermore she also has a more rare divine protection, so because of her, the balance of party always remains constant.

But, even if I, her brother says it, it would only seem like I'm favoring her, so there is not much effect whenever I say it.

The one problem I'm currently being troubled, the low self-confidence of my sister, needs to be set aside temporarily and I need to pay more attention on quest.

「Then, us 『Wing Road』 's next quest is the subjugation of Salamanders」

The leader of party, I, officially inform the taking up of the new quest.

We 5 elite cadets, I, Charl, Kai, Safi, and Nell, have formed an adventurer party which goes by the name of 『Wing Road』

Now that I think about it, it has been a year already, and we're rank 4.

If this quest is successful, we'll be one step closer in reaching the highest rank, Rank 5.

It is unheard of someone becoming Rank 2 in the second year of academy, I don't want to stand out at all.....Well, working as an adventurer I can't show a behaviour that will make us fail in our quest, that won't be good, let's go and finish this quest quickly.



Chapter 194 – Angel Appears!?

2nd of Red Flame Month, We 『Element Master』 are running on the highway aiming for the dungeon to complete the next quest.

But, the legs that are running are not ours.

The thing that is running like a gale on the highway while kicking the ground is two black horses.

In other words, we are horse-riding.

One side is Lily and the other side is Fiona.

Incidentally, the formed is named as Merry and latter as Mary.

「Kurono-san have you gotten somewhat used to horse-riding?」

「Ah, No, Lily is also here.....so not that much」

Lily, who is supporting the beginner at horse-riding, me, by using telepathy to form a bond with horse, laughs 「tee hee」 proudly.

Looking just that would seem like a pleasant scene of Element Master having fun as adventurers, but this black horse I'm currently straddling on is a present from these two, so I just can't feel happy.

Yes, this horse is the present.

Yesterday, Fiona said this,

「In truth, we both have prepared a present for Kurono-san, please take it」

That is this horse, moreover it came with a set of splendid harness.

No not only that, the other present was the Cursed——no, for now let's only worry about this horse.

Cavalry is a necessary item for adventurers.

For reaching the dungeons in the various places, there exists the dragon carriage service, but having a personal horse is more useful.

Its uses isn't something, I, who has lived in a world where private automobiles have spread big and wide, needs to know again and again.

But however, that useful personal horse is expensive, its price equates to the price of cars on earth, no exaggeration in saying that here.

That's why it is said to take a personal horse only after becoming a veteran of rank 3.

Their opinion is that rank 1 and rank 2 should hone their abilities in the dungeons nearby, so it's only natural for them to say that.

Comparing from the common sense of adventurers we have purchased a personal horse before time, so to speak, it's like a school student already has bought a personal car.

I have no intention of shouting that luxury is enemy, I too had been thinking to buy a personal horse after reaching rank 3.

Lily and Fiona gave this to me as a present as if to say, it's isn't much.

I'm grateful for their feelings to give me present, and am happy too.

But, this present in itself is really expensive.

If I had to say in modern-day Japan like feeling it would be, I'm still a high-schooler but got myself a luxury car.

My money sense is not paralytic that I can meekly accept the present by just saying 「Thank you」 .

Due to my sensibilities as a common man, it's natural to suppress my surprise more than the happiness.

「What happened Kurono-san, you're making a complicated face, did you perhaps not like this horse?」

「Eh, you want to buy a new one?」

「No, wait wait, there's no problem with the horse!」

The statement of Lily is really scary, just buying something new because you didn't like it.....that's the thinking of celebrities.

「I still haven't recovered from the shock completely」

Thanks to this present giving case, I found out Lily and Fiona are really rich people.

Up until now we hadn't needed any large amount of money, so I too have never asked them 「How much do you have?」

But, opening the lid they both have several tens of millions of klan, adding up both of their total assets it crosses over 100 million klan.

With that much, they can buy me millions of horses as gift, but I just can't recover from the difference in money sense.

Or is my thinking strange as an adventurer?

「You shouldn't worry much about it Kurono-san, we can easily earn hundreds of millions easily」

「That's right, Kurono don't worry about it, okay?」

We're not being conceited, our true strength far surpasses rank 4.

For high ranked adventurers earning that much is really easy, naturally, the danger levels and strength of monsters too is high.

「I see, that's right.....I will just accept it grateful for now. But when I get more money, I will present you both something awesome, get hyped for it!」

If I don't say that, I won't be able to get out of the uncomfortable feeling of being blessed.

But this, my equipments, funds for Simon's research, and presents for these two.....just how much will I have to earn?

It feels like I have been caught in a really big debt cycle though being only 17 years old.

.
. .

After shaking on the horse for some hours, I have arrived in the base of northern part of Galahad Mountain Range, the village of Dacia after a week. Compared to the time I came here in the dragon carriage, the fatigue levels are completely different, I still can't get used to horse-riding.

However, it's not the time for complaining about it, this is a required skill for living as an adventurer, I have to learn it as fast as I can.

For that, I am heading towards the stable of village which keeps the horses, by pulling the reins of this two-headed horse.

That's why I have sent Lily and Fiona to the adventurer guild of Dacia for completing the formalities, and this time we have to capture something alive, so the situation is different from normal.

「Oh, there it is」

Pulling the reins of black horse, after walking some time I see the destination, stable.

I will reach in some time, the moment I had that impression,

「Uuo!」

I was stopped by the reins.

I don't know what it thought, but the horse had stopped moving.

「Oi, what happened?」

I naturally ask the question, but a normal horse can't possibly answer my question.

What? Why stop? While thinking that I pull the reins hardly, but the horse doesn't even move a centimetre.

Really what happened, just before it was following me.

What, do horses stop moving suddenly?

I neither have the experience in straddling neither nor do I have any knowledge of horses' behaviour, so I have no idea what actually happened.

「What happened, come on, move」

This is bad, unless Lily and Fiona come I have no way of solving this problem.

But I'm not a summoner, or else I would have called a servant and sent it to call them both here.

Having said that, if I leave here to call them both, then these two horses might run back to wild.

I can't solve this problem alone, this horse is still not trying to understand my feelings and is just standing there boldly without moving even a bit.

「I give up.....」

Is this the the thing, to be at a loss, the only thing I can hear is the nasal breathing of this horse *Bufu*, what is this sense of emptiness.

The time I felt that mental pain,

「Um, are you troubled?」

I was called out from behind by a girl with a warm and pleasant voice feeling like the sunlight of spring.

I turn back and there stood the girl I had imagined, no, even more beautiful girl.

Her age is the same as Fiona, her face has hints of baby face which can let her be called as a young lady, and her expression is serene like that of lady.

The glossy black hair is separated in two side from the bangs, the back hair is long enough to reach her waist, commonly said it is the princess haircut, no, she does have the air of a princess around her.

Her blue eyes calm one down and her gaze under her sharp eyebrows is lovely, her white face is well-ordered just like a doll, I can't feel the coldness that comes from Sariel who too is a white faced beauty.

The reason I have overlapped her with Sariel must be because of her attire. There is no emblem of cross, but a white cloth like that of monks or priests with comfortable designs is wrapped on her body.

Most probably she is not a normal villager, she might be adventurer with the class of Cleric or Priest and works in a temple or somewhere sacred. Both classes are traditional and have continued since ancient times, I don't have the theory of hating a person wearing the same attire, so I have nothing to say about her attire.

On the contrary, the more I look the more she is different from Sariel, her height is around 170 cms. Quite tall for a girl.

To add more, she has something that she wins against Sariel, Lily and Fiona too who is far surpassing the normal standards, that is breasts.

That too is so big, even though she is wearing a priest like cloth for hiding body lines, they are still pressing forward claiming their presence.

The scene of Susu-san having big breasts in the morning suddenly appears in my mind, it's the same as that, or even more.

Well I'm not the man who can be swayed by big breasts only.

No, even a big-breast loving guy, will feel more impact on seeing the thing this girl has.

That is the white wings sprouting from her back.

They are not wings of light like Lily, but white big wings of soft feathers like that of a swan are sprouting from her back.

The little movements of the wings is proving that they are not artificial.

There are various types of races in Pandora, but I have never heard of a race with the appearance like that of an angel, is it mutation? Or else, I just don't know but they do exist here?

Either way, it's not good to ask her someone's race on meeting them for the first time, it is rude

Even if she had a halo above her head and looking just like an angel, but here I should talk to her as a kind girl who called out to me.

「Ah, Sorry, well my horse isn't listening to me and has stopped moving」
I explain the miserable situation while revealing a wry smile to this angel-like beautiful girl.

「Oh my, that is troubling」
The angel does a reaction which coincided with her expression and words. Looking at her reaction, looks like she isn't scared from my face like those female students from the other day, this is good.

So an angel doesn't judge a person based on their appearances, eh, really grateful.

「It's only a little to reach the stable, but it suddenly stopped, just what might have happened」

「Oh, so you're taking the horses there, right?」
Yes, I had no reason to lie so I affirmed.

Then, maybe she liked something in my answer, she opened her mouth full with confidence while making her eyes glitter violently.

「In that case, I can help」
A statement filled with willingness, kindness and volunteer-like intention came out of angel's mouth.

「Rally? Thank you very much, it will help me a lot」
I immediately accept her help.
It really helped me, now I don't have to wait like a fool holding the reins and keep on waiting for Lily and Fiona who god knows when will come.

「Yes, please leave it to me」
She smiles brightly as if a halo has started to shine, and immediately starts helping me.

Without faltering in front of large horse, she patted the nape of the neck of the two-headed horse with her white hands as if it is her pet dog.

Do they start listening to their owners if done like this?

I quietly looked at angel and horse flirting while tightly holding the reins.

「—Hey, please, can you hear to what he says」

I heard her mutter that in a really low voice.

Normally, the animals can't understand words, so her actions seem to be normally trying to talk to her, but I know person who can talk with them. Due to that, I cannot help but feel that she can too talk with animals like Lily.

「This child seems to be slightly afraid, but, it's alright now」

Looking back at me, she tells me that while smiling.

I, feeling 50% faith in those words, pull the reins, and

「.....It moved」

The horse moved a step forward.

I pull more then it moves one step, two step, three step, it had returned to the state he was before.

「Thank you very much, it really helped me」

I send the heartfelt words of gratitude to her who is looking at me and horse with an happy expression.

「No, same here, I'm happy I was of use」

She replies with a perfect smile with no ulterior motives.

I have to clearly thank her, I tried to, but

「Well then I will have to go now, let's both have good luck on our quests」

I couldn't call out the words to stop her while looking at her gallantly leave the place.

「On our quests eh, so she was an adventurer」

I unintentionally murmur that.

I couldn't feel the sharpness of an adventurer who fight as if it is usual, so I can't hide my surprise that she wasn't a normal priest.

But, there are also exceptions like Lily, not all have that '-esque' feeling on adventurer, not always people match with their appearances.

Anyhow, there is no doubt that I was saved by her kindness.

I once again thank the angel, who is now no-where to be seen, in my heart and started walking while pulling the reins of the horses.

Chapter 195 – Camp

「We are the, son of 『Sword King』 Leonhart Tristan Spada, the great man owning the, the white holy sword, forbidden black magic, and, the epitome of darkness, the reincarnation of demon king, that's right, We are Wilhart Tristan Spa—」

In front of the entrance to Dacia village, the second prince of Spada, Wilhard named himself in high spirits, but

「You're too noisy, idiot brother!」

「Daaaaaaaaaaaaa!!」

After getting a strong drop kick from behind, Wilhart rolls on the ground for some times.

He has already dirtied the glorious red mantle of elite cadets by the mud.

「W-Who was that!? To slip through our sixth sense field and attack me, you don't seem like a normal person.....don't tell you're the lone survivor of the crazed assassination organization 'Shadow Moonlight'—」

「Who is the lone survivor of some assassination organization, can't you stop discharging your delusions, idiot」

[ET: Try to remember this delusions about a great assassin, it might help in next chapter for you to know that this guy is a genius!]

Wilhart gets up while thinking about the heroic past of a great assassin who had learnt threatening assassination techniques.

Looking in front, there stood a red twin tail haired girl in an imposing manner with a scornful expression.

「Oh, isn't this our sister, the attack just now was a really good one, looks like you have learnt a part of monk's strength」

「I'm a magician! Don't change my class on your own accord!!」

Wearing the red mantle of elite cadets, the second prince and third princess of Spada, Wilhart and Charlotte were looking at each other face-to-face.

「However, why are you here?」

While positing his monocle with his index finger and doing a cool pose he had practiced a lot, he asks his sister.

「It's because of quest, isn't that obvious. We're not here for 'camping' unlike you 'substitutes'」

The elite cadets are divided in two teams, one is formed by superior people and the other one is mish-mash by inferior people.

The people from the first team call this second team as 'substitutes', a team with substitutes, in other words it's a derogatory term.

「Gununu, I never said it was my outdoor training trip, you shouldn't judge on your own speculations——」

「Several groups of 5 people with that big luggage, moreover the destination is Dacia Village, what else can it be other than camping?」

The outdoor training trip is the class commonly called as camping by students.

This is a humiliating class for those who can't survive on the outside easily, in other words someone less than an adventurer.

The contents of the outdoor training camp i to spend 1 week within the mountain forest present in the northern part of Galahad Mountain Range.

And, because they are given more things than needed, it becomes overloaded, besides a group of 5 people has been set as a rule.

The current Wilhart has been selected applicable for taking the outdoor training.

Of course, the other 4 members have taken quite a distance away from Wilhart.

「Fu, Kukuku——That's a good reasoning my sister Charlotte, I, indeed have to take this cursed asceticism of hell, I have come to this Dacia village for that and am about to go to the training place」

「Asceticism of hell, eh.....quite an interesting hell that is, if you even have a maid」

「Ku, Nuoo.....」

Wilhart getting hit on the soft nerve, clenched his teeth with a desperate expression to bear the wicked tongue attacks of his sister.

Behind someone like him, a beautiful maid in clean apron dress is standing like a shadow.

「Yes Seria, it must be troubling for you to take care of an idiot like him」

「No, it's an obligation of a maid to take care of her master」

While bowing to the princess of Spada, she added the words of salutation. Looks like the girl Charlotte cares more about this maid rather than her own brother, Wilhart.

「Please take care of this idiotic brother so he doesn't make trouble for other camping members. Every time he discharges his remarks the glory and grace of Spada goes into decline」

Understood, Wilhart glared at Seria, who said words of acknowledgement, with the eyes that seemed to look at a traitor.

But, he concludes that rather than cutting in there would lead him to getting abused more, so he changes the topic.

「You were saying quest, what is it about?」

Though Charlotte has quick beating hands and bad mouth, but it doesn't change the fact that she is his blood-related sister.

Though he admits her ability in magic, but he is overprotective and worries if she took up on a quest with dangers.

「Sigh, what does it has to do with you——」

「——It's salamander subjugation」

Blocking the statement of Charlotte, the voice of another man told the contents of quest to Wilhart.

「.....Nero, huh」

「Yo, you're the same as always」

Though they are students, but Wilhart is a prince.

For Nero Julius Elrod to talk friendly with him can be either because he too is a prince or it is his innate character.

At any rate, Wilhart and Nero in the truest meaning have same social positions, at the very least they never talk in formal language even in public.

「When you say Salamander, do you mean their nest?」

「Correct, you only have good brain Wilhart」

The ironic smile on the face of Nero with black hair red eyes and mysterious looks can easily capture the hearts of girls.

But, Wilhart is not a girl, and he has seen the beautiful face of this prince of Avalon since childhood, so he surely has been envious of his beauty.

The thing he is more concerned about is the contents of the quest for entering the nest of salamanders, the strongest monsters in the Galahad Mountain Range.

「Even though you are rank 4, but isn't that dangerous?」

Though his pompous tone didn't go, but the joke surely did.

「Don't worry, no matter who is against us we will somehow get through it」

In front the Nero's line of sight, stood the prideful party members.

Heaven-sent child of sword Galbraith, 『Magical Eyes』 of Hydra, Wilhart, being in the same school year, knows about their strength.

Of course, he only knows about their strength and has no familiarity with any of them.

After being called as 「I can't remember the names of weak people」 by Galbraith and 「Creep」 by Hydra, the conversations stopped forever.

It wasn't a line to be said to the royalty of the country they serve to, but Wilhart isn't an intolerant man who would get angry with just that much.

He is more or less near good-for-nothing.

Keeping it aside, but indeed it's the 『Wing Road』 of Nero with every member strong then it's possible they won't be outdone by salamanders in 『Salamander's nest』 too.

But, still he worries.

「Don't put us as together with weak you, brother. Even without having you worry about us, we can defeat something like salamanders easily」

「.....I see」

But still, if Charlotte is in this mood, it would be wasting time to warn her.

「If you get hurt, do get Princess Nell to heal you」

That's why he wants Charlotte to come back without getting hurt anywhere, he said something between those lines.

「You don't have to tell me that much.....huh, where is Nell?」

Charlotte surveys the surroundings by turning around, but she wasn't able to see 5 members with her golden eyes.

「Hm. Ah, this always happens if you take eyes off her」

Good Grief, Nero shrugged his shoulders.

Wilhart recalls that his sister, first princess of Avalon, Nell, always seems to roam aimlessly here and there.

And she also has the combo of poor direction sense, it's not bearable for the people to search for her, and there hasn't, even once, the pattern where she went and returned back on her own.

「Isn't she again being helpful to someone somewhere?」

Due to her very kind heart, she can't abandon a person who is troubled.

That goes the same for people not from her country, and she interacts with them without any division, she's more like a saint rather than princess.

[ET: Saint the female version here. Not the male sage/saint version]

However, though she extends a helping hand, the things that clumsy girl can do are only limited to her peerless rare talent in healing others.

「I've been telling her to stop because it's dangerous, but she never hears me」

Seems like the prince of Avalon too is troubled by the unreasonability of his sister.

Of course, the girl called Nell doesn't give a drop kick all of a sudden, nor call her brother idiot, she has a personality fit for princess and is lovely.

Wilhart always prays that the tomboyish Charlotte learns even a part of her lady-like character.

「Oh, rare things happen too, she has returned」

Maybe he sensed her presence, Nero turned back, and there stood, well talk of the devil, the first princess of Avalon, Nell Julius Elrod.

Wilhart though has no ability to sense presences he could still make out her figure even if he looks her from far.

That is because she has rare characteristic of having white wings on her back while having the body of a human.

Nell having the figure of angels drawn in ancient paintings rushes over the crows of her party members while smiling and swaying her big breasts which are quite not suitable for someone her age.

「Oh, isn't this Prince Wilhart, what a coincidence」

While feeling the feels of healing without any use of healing magic, Wilhart exchanged salutations.

「Geez, where were you loitering?」

Nero whines in a fed-up voice.

「I'm sorry, big brother, but I have a really wonderful meeting」

「Hmm, so you were helpful to that person?」

「Yes! I was able to help an apprentice magician who was standing still because his horse wasn't hearing him!」

What a heart-warming story this is.

However being touched by this goddess-like princess, that apprentice magician might become the new member of this princess' fan club.

Thinking like that, only pity for making another man insane comes in the heart.

「Well the members are all here, let's go to the nest」

Charlotte almost steps forward in high spirits while brimming with motivation,

「Wait, Charlotte」

But Wilhart stopped her.

「What?」

Though she says in a displeased voice, but due to the fact she didn't ignore him means that there was not much cracks between in their relationship as siblings.

「In these northern parts, recently stronger monsters have started appearing near the foot of mountains」

「So what? It be because of change in territories, right?」

Though they are monsters, they are a part of wilderness.

Even inside dungeons the loitering routes or appearing places changes everyday.

Even more so in hills and fields, it's not rare for the inhabiting place to change at times.

「No, it seems to be the case for all monsters」

But, it is too much suspicious if all the monsters of that area have a change in the territories.

「Maybe because salamanders are too strong, the other strong ones near the summit are avoiding them」

Not only limited to salamander, but if a really strong monster appears, the other monsters in the surroundings run away from that place.

And, if it leads to all monsters changing the places then it means the monster is a rogue with lot of power.

Such dangerous monsters rarely are seen by other people.

「So that means I'm now more interested in fighting the salamanders」

「No, isn't that 'more' troublesome」

Hearing Wilhart's story Nero and Charlotte were contrastive, but they all left the place while increasing their guard.

The elegant bow Nell did completely deleted the bad image those two left on Wilhart's mind.

「It would be great if they come back safely, sigh」

「Wil-sama」

While Wilhart is worrying for her sister's safety, Seria comes near him quietly and calls out to him meekly.

「What?」

「The descending of monsters also means that, Wil-sama, your outdoor training is going to be more severe, so before worrying about others think about yourself」

「!?」 *[ET: Let me rephrase what he said there. He said: What the **FUC**joigeroiehr oioerhofohh K jgfhioWyr\$^&\$^\$*&\$#^%^]*

I leave it to you if something happens, help me then, the young prince of Spada requests his maid in a pitiable manner, then he left the Dacia village while praying to the black gods for not letting monsters attack him.

Chapter 196 – Cursed Black Hair

Long long time ago, in the mansion of a certain noble lived a long black-haired maid.

Her hair was supple and glossy, based on just hair they were the best, but they reached her ankle and the bangs always covered more than half of her face, which made her look creepy.

A maid serving her master, wouldn't be forgiven to let them grow that long even if they were beautiful.

But she had been forgiven to have those tremendous super long hair.

Because, though she wore the apron dress for maids, she was in fact the bodyguard of her master.

That bodyguard maid had the extra magic to use her hair in any way she wanted.

She was the descent of a certain assassination clan, the result of crossbreeding experiments in ancient times was that she could activate extra magic and limit the power of Hydra to her hair.

[ET: Piece of advice here, the hydra family is something else this hydra is something else. Family is called 「ハイ ドラ (Haidora)」 and and this whatever is called 「ヒュ ドラ(Hyudora)」. One is monster (latter) and one is not related to living things (former). For more info, well read ancient crap and some computer books]

Her black hair with the power of Hydra would turn into impregnable defense at extreme times and also entangle the hands and legs of the enemy to stop any sort of attack, the girl with her hair demonstrated great talent as bodyguard.

However, the reason she was currently hired as a bodyguard for a son of a certain noble wasn't because of this ability,

「Oh, you have quite a nice face there. If I'm going to be followed by a bodyguard all day long then a girl like you would be best!」

But, it was because of such a vulgar reason.

Judging from the standard basis for choosing her was enough to see that her master, the son of noble was a lewd man.

He liked women more if compared to getting meal three times a day, rather than exploiting taxes, or getting honor from king, he liked making love with women more.

He made love with many women, like, daughter of a wealthy noble, gentle maid, voluptuous high-class prostitute, innocent farmer's daughters, chaste married woman—if he liked the appearance, forgetting the social positions he would lay hands on that girl.

Therefore, even though the black-haired woman was an elite assassin raised by an assassination clan, he would choose her based on her appearance and that so without any hesitation.

And he didn't need to persuade her, the night she was hired, she opened her body as per her master's orders.

However, the man who liked being cruel while making love, he was displeased with the woman's attitude of giving her body so easily.

There that man took decided to make this expressionless mannequin-like maid actually love him from her heart.

The man used every viles he had known from experience from various women, and he approached near her.

Between that, some man with displeasure with the tax rates of territory attacked him.

It was her first task as bodyguard, with an expressionless face, she protected her master and killed the ruffian by breaking his neck with her hair.

The figure of maid killing the man without even having a chance to know what happened would be fearful, but the man got worked up because this woman was worthy to fall in the depths of hell.

[ET: For readers who read the TL's of Nikubenki (r-18) novel, would understand the meaning of falling in depths of hell (pleasure?)]

After that, somewhat time passed.

The man whispered about love to the maid, and gave pleasure to her by embracing her body.

Once again, on some day on new assassins came aiming for man's life.

The maid once protected the man and strangled all assassins to death.

But at that time, the arm of man was scratched by an arrow that attacked him from a blind spot, though small he was injured.

The man sharply saw that the moment he was injured, the expression of maid changed as though her face had expression.

The man understood that all the work he did till now was not useless, the frozen heart of woman has started to thaw though little by little but surely.

After that, the man approached the maid in more high spirits.

Then, the time the third attack came,

「Master.....I'm scared.....to lose you」

The maid was worrying over the safety of man while crying.

After several from hiring, the hard efforts of the man finally bore fruit.

From then the maid was loved by the man without being expressionless but with innocent reactions of a lovestruck maiden.

But that life didn't last even a year and marked its end.

「I'm getting married」

Marriage, yes, the engagement of that man was decided.

If he was getting the bride from family of same status or lower status, then he wouldn't have stopped on laying his hands on maid or other women.

However the bride was not only of higher status but was the daughter of royalty, the princess of the country he served.

No matter how much difference in positions, having blood of royalty was necessary, the difference in power was like heaven and earth.

It wasn't girl coming to his house but he going to the bride's house, the man wouldn't face against people with more status and power and could only agree to what his bride, the princess said.

Hence, the princess who was to be betrothed to him,

「Dismiss that creepy bodyguard」

Said as such, so he had no choice but to dismiss the maid who had saved him 3 times.

「I'm sorry, but our love will remain for eternity——」

The man bids farewell with sugared words.

The man was a playboy, so he left the woman he was playing with, with those words that would leave no future troubles.

And this time too he thought, that their forbidden relationship of master and maid would clearly end.

「I wil.....I-I will protect you.....Master!」

But the moment that black-haired woman twined around his body, the man sensed it.

「I don't know what princess and all that is.....but that woman is.....an assassin trying to break us apart」

He perceived that she was different from the girls he had been playing with, she was twisted.

「But it's fine.....this time too.....I will protect you.....」

The black hair covered her and the man inside like a coffin made of steel. It didn't take much time for the other people living in mansion to know the abnormality, they all immediately understood the bodyguard maid went mad and attacked her master.

Naturally, to save the man, private army of the noble launched an attack. By that point of time, the coffin enlarged in size and became to the size of that of a cage.

The defense made by her black hair couldn't be broken no matter how many times blades cut or tried to pierce it.

They were able to cut some fibres of hair, but they were immediately regenerated.

Even so, the soldiers didn't gave and kept on attacking, without choosing any way they just tried to destroy it.

1 month passed after that.

In the mansion of noble, the jail of black hair was still enshrined.

She didn't even once opened the defense and 'protected' her master from every sort of attacks by capturing him in the jail of eternity.

Like that, one day the defense made by her black hair vanished maybe because she used up all her strength.

All that remained was the corpses of a man and woman wrapped in between the black hair as though they were embracing each other.

The man had an expression of despair on his face, the woman had a kind expression as though to comfort the man.

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. .
A worker told that the bunch of black hair in his hand was the hair of the girl who went through all that.

Even after the dying, the black hair didn't lose its glossiness and looked beautiful, even if the story of bodyguard was a lie, it doesn't change the fact that this black hair had some sort of magical power stored into it.

Then the worker, made gloves by knitting the black hair.

The worker wore it the moment he finished making it, and,

「I will protect master」

Heard that voice.

The next morning, the corpse of worker wrapped in black hair and strangled to death was found in the workshop.

Ever since then, every person who wore these gloves was killed in the same way.

At some time it was called as 『BlackHair Curse 「Coffin」 』 and every person feared it.

It was unknown how many people had died before it was sealed as a dangerous cursed item.

Like that even after people stopped reaching her, she was still waiting, for her new master to appear.

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Those cursed gloves,

「Noisy, shut up and listen to me!」

Are right now silent due to blackening and fitting just perfectly in my both hands.

It almost feels like they're part of my skin.

The only fault is, sometimes the shout of a woman shouting 「Master～」 would echo inside my brain.

Well it's fine, this is normal for a cursed item.

These gloves which feel really great to wear and are made from the black hair of a lovestruck maiden named as 『Black Hair Curse 「Coffin」 』, is a gift from Lily.

I'm too scared to hear the price because she said this was brought from the high-class shop of Mordred Weapon Company within the noble area.

I don't know how she used a shop in noble area, seems like the secrets of Lily have increased in just one day.

Keeping that aside, let's talk about gloves.

This is not just gloves which feel good to wear but also have a great effect hidden inside them. This isn't called cursed item for no reason.

「Great. With this, the strength of 『Anchor Hand』 is more than double」
You will understand that if you see the scene in front of my eyes.

Within the mountain forest in the northern part of Galahad Mountain Range, the Doltos, having a gigantic body like an elephant, had its movements sealed by my 『Anchor Hand』 wrapping around it.

The wire-like 『Anchor Hand』 would not seem different at a glance, but looking more properly, it could be seen it is made by many strands of hair bundling up together to form a wire.

Apparently, this 『Black Hair Curse 「Coffin」 』, these gloves, have an effect of enhancing the strength of magic which restrain other people.

Furthermore, though I haven't used it during battle, but it also enhances the defense magic.

The reason Lily gifted me this is because it enhances the defense force and binding forces.

Compared to other experimental subjects, I'm not much specialised in defensive magic, and 『Anchor Hand』 is a magic I can rely on, it played an active role in fight with Cyprus and Ai as well.

『Black Hair Curse 「Coffin」 』 has no firepower, but it supports in other sides, as an equipment this is an ideal one which implements all the effects from just being gloves.

Indeed Lily, this the best choice, completely different from the White Punpun robe I bought for her.

Well then, it's not the time to be always getting impressed by the ability of 『Black Hair Curse 「Coffin」 』 .

I'm not binding the Doltos on whim, but capturing it alive is the quest this time.

「I will open it's mouth, so shoot the anaesthetic ball」

「Yes!」

「Roger」

As if I'm controlling a marionette, several 『Anchor Hand』 extend from my hand and wrap around Doltos' mammoth like face with a long nose and teeth.

I reel in the black wires which have dug into the upper jaw and lower jaw, finally my power surpasses the power of jaws and I open up the mouth of Doltos.

「Eii」

「Here we go」

The two shoot the softball-size ball within the mouth of Doltos while raising enjoying voices.

This ball is commonly known as anaesthetic ball, though it does not has immediate effects but it can intensely paralyse the body of monsters.

It won't take effect upon hitting the body, but only upon intake of it like right now, in other words it's a paralysis poison capsule.

After silencing the monster with anaesthetic ball, the capture is completed, after that we have inform guild by the bird for transportation uses (loan), and give the monster to the retrieval team which would be dispatched by guild.

「Then I will start installing the binding item」

「I leave it up to you, and I think it would be bound for a while, so you don't have be in a hurry」

It takes a while for the anaesthetic ball to take effect, in that time if not binded up, then there is a risk that monster would run away.

And, even if the anaesthetic ball is working, one needs to be on guard and keep it bind up using a thick rope.

And it would take place for retrieval team to come here, during that time it is needed to maintain the prey captured.

Quests like these are not easy with just defeating monsters and showing their body parts for proof. These are really troublesome

That's why the levels of difficulty changes in subjugation and capturing quests, even if they are of same monsters.

「Seeing the Doltos, somehow you start feeling hungry, right?」

「You're right, it is really tasty」

While chatting idly like that, the first capturing quest of Element Master was completed.



Chapter 197 – Attack on Camp

5th of Red Flame month, the second night came after camping in the Galahad Mountains for outdoor training.

「Fumu, then we will take the heavy responsibility of being Nighthawk Searcher」

In simple words, Wilhart offers to change the duty of guarding during night with another member of the team.

「N-no, we cannot let Wilhart-sama do something like that——」

The male student tried to gently reject the offer of Wilhart with an annoyed expression, but

「Fuahahaha! You don't have to fear, with me guarding, no monster will come near use. I will let you people sleep without any worries till tomorrow morning!」

The male member was not able to retort that 'If you make that much noise, the sleeping members will wake up and monsters will come near'

Though he is like this, he is a prince.

Because both are students he hadn't said that it is noisy, but he still hesitates to snap.

If he showed any rude behaviour, then after others would distance themselves, of course, the opposite can also happen,

「Go and sleep nicely, like a baby being held by its mother」

This prince with a personality this painful wouldn't become center of state power in future, this is something that had been predicted several years before among the nobles.

The Spada royal family which respects martial ways has a child like Wilhart who has failing marks in both magic and martial skills, no one thinks he would be able to surpass his brother Aisenhart to become the successor, in the first place no one would want it to happen.

The next generation of Spada would be lead by Aisenhart, Wilhart only needs to live as a spare inside a neat inner palace with women so that royal lineage doesn't end and also that he doesn't become a hindrance to Aisenhart.

In short, there is no one who would try to court Wilhart even when he has no chance of standing on the big stage in history neither has any power, and among the elite cadets that trend is strikingly obvious.

「Sigh.....well then I will leave it to you」

The second prince Wolhart is a really displeasing existence to elite cadets with no advantage and courting and a great disadvantage upon acting rude with him.

Frankly put, they were all annoyed.

「Fumu, leave it to us, Fuhahahahaha!」

This tone only increased the annoyance.

Still everyone would be somewhat respectful and no one would bully him. And the person himself doesn't do anything about this behaviour, that's why he is able to laugh it off today too. Wilhart is the only happy-go-lucky man in this world.

「.....」

Upon becoming alone, even Wilhart becomes quiet.

The little bonfire illuminates the surroundings slightly.

The brook is flowing quietly, the tent is placed on the riverside, so with no obstructions within surroundings it is easy to stand guard there.

Of course, there is a thickly grown forest some metres forward, but it is much better to not put the tent there.

But, the bodyguard maid, Seria is hiding somewhere within that dark thick forest.

Though Wilhart has become 17 years old, an adult, but because of his low fighting power he is not allowed to be alone without a bodyguard.

However getting help of bodyguard within this outdoor training would not be good.

Hence, she is treated as 'not present there', and she is in hiding while watching over her master

「.....Hm」

At that time, the sound of rustling is heard from the forest in front.

The guard needs to be more aware of disturbances in forest because if they monster would approach that wouldn't be the brook side but forest side.

It doesn't need to be said, within the overgrown forest it is difficult someone approaching, so it is easy to approach without being found out. Wilhart takes out the normal 『Mithril Rapier』 which he has named 『Vaiceschveato』 from his waist and at the same time glared inside the forest where the sound is coming out from.

「Who is there, I know you are there」

Though he knows there is someone, but he doesn't know if it's a wild animal, or monster or a human.

And he doesn't know the numbers, Wilhart has no sixth sense or magic to know it or even skill to sense presence.

Though his tone says that already knows the opponent is there, but until he confirms it is a monster, there is no need to wake up the members, he judged.

If he kept waking them up hearing every sound, then they won't be able to take rest.

「You can come out」

The sounds from inside the forest grow more loud, and deliberately emphasize that someone is hiding there.

But he still doesn't what is there, hence, he imagines the worst case scenario of a dangerous monster coming out and in a second the feeling of stress increases for Wilhart.

「Y-You can c-come out.....」

The wariness and tension rises, though he said the same line from before, but the nuance has become a lot weak.

In the endless feeling time, Wilhart keeps his whole attention to the forest,
SFX: Bashari (*splash)

But the reason he could respond to that sound of water can only be said due to good luck.

Hearing sound of water means that something has appeared in the river behind him.

Before reaching that conclusion, Wilhart, reflectively turned back.

「What!？」

There were 2 bears——no, it was rank 1 monster Punpun with rabbit ears growing on head, and small and stout body, a figure which nobody would forget upon seeing once.

The 2 Punpun reach the riverside and now the distance between Wilhart and them is only 4 metres.

He understood that these two came from behind while he was completely paying attention to forest and at the same time he noticed these two throwing 'something' towards him.

The thing thrown was about the size of a human head, without knowing it what it was it had landed on the ground.

「Waaah!？」

The place it landed was the bonfire, the only light source in the dark night. The sound of water splashing, and sizzle sound from the cooling of fire reaches his ears.

It didn't land on the bonfire by coincidence, but it was aimed there.

But before reaching that conclusion, he falls into panic due to the sudden blackout.

His eyes had gotten used to the light of bonfire, so if the light gets lost suddenly it's natural he won't be able to see anything.

After some time, under this cloudless night sky with full moon out, he might be able to see somewhat, but

SFX: GAaaaoooo!

The monster which has already approached in front won't wait for the eyes to be used to black.

「U-Uaaaawwwaaaaaaahhhh!？」

reflexively he swings the sword in his hand.

Naturally, he isn't able to feel the sensation of cutting something down and only cuts through empty space.

Within the ignorant night, Wilhart had been prepared for death, but

「—『Torch』 ثلاث ضياء شمعۃ ضوء」

With the sudden dazzling light appearing, he perceived that his fate has yet to exhaust.

「Is it you Seria!？」

「Yes, Wil-sama you Seria is here」

Before he knew it, the maid with beautiful face and green ponytail wearing an apron dress stood besides him.

The 『Torch』's fireball shining in the night sky equally illuminates the figure of Seria holding somewhat large dagger knives in both her hands and the figure of several Punpun.

「T-These many were here.....」

「Not only numbers, they are also pretty regulated and disciplined, no doubt, they are being led by a powerful boss」

Wilhart recalled the lecture about the territories of monsters he took really seriously.

Even among rank 1 monsters, the ones who form a group means the one leading is boss and is strong, or they are special individuals with intelligence due to that the difficulty level is also increased by a rank.

This group of Punpun who diverted the attention of Wilhart, let a detached force approach him from behind and closed the only light source for stopping his movements, makes them a rank 2 equal monster.

「They're not the opponent the current Wil-sama can stand against」

「Guu.....」

The strength of Wilhart is on the level of somehow winning against rank 1 monster, Goblin only in one-on-one battles.

Even without a boss, if they attack in group he wouldn't stand a chance.

「No, but, right now we have comrades we can rely on! Wake up the brave comrades, the time for battle has come!!」

When Wilhart raises his voice, the 4 camp members who have already waken up from the sounds jump out of tent as if there asses had caught fire.

「Waaaah, this is gonna be bad!？」

「Don't fucking kid with me!」

「Run!」

「Oi come on fast, this way!」

The 4 reliable comrades, run with only their clothes on, and plotted an escape plan.

Due to the dazzling running style, even the Punpun surrounding the camp ignore them.

「Huh, Eh, Oo~ii, You guys.....」

Wilhart raised his voice to stop them with an astonished expression, but the 4 had already disappeared on the other side of dark night.

「Great teamwork this is」

「Y-You people.....you're losers who leave the captain of your team and plot to escape before me, you guys don't deserve to be knights of Spada!!」

Wilhart shouts while holding sword in a bent back posture seeming he would fall at any time.

「It was unfortunate you had to meet with strong Punpun, now it is decided for you to take supplementary classes for outdoor training, Wil-sama」

The Punpun encircle Wilhart and Seria, but they only show vigilance while maintaining a distance and don't attack.

Wilhart is having cold sweat on his face without knowing when the curtain to battle would drop, but on the contrast, Seria is keeping her cool expressionless face.

After glaring at each other for sometime, the sound of rustling comes from the forest and a bigger Punpun appears on the riverside.

「Mu, so he's the boss? 」

This Punpun has a large body both vertically and horizontally, its height reaching 3 metres and its one eye is injured making it a perfect one-eyed boss.

The boss starts glaring contest with Seria.

But that is soon concluded, the boss then raises its voice as if to order its subordinates.

Then taking distance Seria won't be able to reach them, they start taking out the items and everything from camp.

「Ah, the food is.....」

「The outdoor training is already a fail for you, there's no harm in letting them take it」

The Punpun took each and everything like food, or items that won't help monsters at all.

During the time everything was being plundered, it only stared at Seria paying attention to her movements and it didn't even move a single step. The next moment when he thought it would take back the crows of Punpun, SFX: Gaa000oooo0000ooo!!

A loud roar resounded.

That howl is that would let people far away shake in fear, a really sinister and fiendish howl.

「O-Oi, what is it this t-time!?!」

Wilhart jumped to cling to Seria due to fear, even the Punpun working diligently showed clear fear.

They dropped down everything they were carrying and froze on the spot.

SFX: Gaaaa—nnn!

The boss cries, then the Punpun threw everything they had plundered and ran away deep into forest in full speed.

「H-Hey, Seria.....doesn't it feel dangerous?」

Wilhart returned to his previous state and asked something miserable, but Seria didn't make fun of it.

「Wil-sama, let's make a run for it, right now」

Seria gripped Wilhart's hand and ran with the same force the Punpun ran. Seeing Seria serious after many years, Wilhart understood the danger of things.

Apparently, the owner of that fiendish howl is the strong monster who can even make this Seria choose the option to run.

But however, because of that, Wilhart stopped moving in his tracks.

「Wait! If we run away what will happen to them!?!」

Them is the 4 members who got scared of attack of monsters and ran away. Although he hates them somewhat, but not to the extent that he wants them dead.

On the contrary, forgiving them while smiling would be the right thing to do as a royalty.

*[ET: I can't believe there are good people like him. *sob*]*

「I cannot leave them alone」

Please, save them.

Wilhart bows his head down like he did when he found an adventurer whom he named as Nightmare Berserker.

But, the answer this time,

「I'm sorry, Wil-sama, but I won't listen to that order」

Were the clear words of rejection.

He couldn't speak foolish things like *You dare defy your master's order*.

The live of her master second prince of Spada, or the lives of 4 who ran on their own accord, it is obvious she took the first one.

Wilhart understood it, and could only run while his hand is being gripped by Seria.

For running away from the owner of that fiendish howl within the Galahad Mountains.

Chapter 198 - Encounter with the Red Despair

The 4 management class students stopped their legs while gasping for breath.

“haa.....haa.....man, I was really scared.”

“We were totally surrounded, that was damn dangerous.”

“By the way, will that delusional prince be fine if we leave him like that?”

“Seria-chan was there so he should be fine. Those ugly monsters should be easy stuff for her.”

Maybe because they were able to safely escape, the 4 of them were laughing.

They felt absolutely no sense of guilt at the fact that they had left one of their members back there.

But, considering that nobles were born with a status that claimed that they were above normal people, it couldn't be helped if they'd be happy with saving just themselves after all.

“What do we do now?”

One of the students asked while surveying the surroundings.

This place looked the same as their camp, i.e., it was by the river.

After jumping out of the tents, they had run directly upstream.

Rather than running inside a forest with dense trees and undulated landscape, it was simply easier to run by the river which had no obstacles.

“Ah, I do have a sword, we'll make do somehow.”

Though they ran away with whatever they were wearing, they still had their basic equipments.

“That's true, let's return at our own pace.”

“But I’ve had enough of [Air Walker], kay?”

Though they were scared by being suddenly attacked by a group of monsters, their abilities remained the same which were suitable for someone who had cleared the supposedly super difficult entrance exam for the management course.

They were well learned in both magic and Martial skills of lower level.

But still, they were not ‘skilled’ with it like actual adventurers. They had simply been taught these while they were young under the guidance of a specialised instructor, similar to a sport.

They can fire [Ignis Sagita] as well use [Slash]. But whether they could use them in actual battle, the answer would be definitely NO.

That’s why they were scorned as the ‘Spare Class’.

“We came pretty far away. I can’t even see the camp.”

“I think we travelled about 1 km?”

They were literally fast at running away with the use of [Air Walker].

Though their skill was barely enough to activate it, but as long as the movement-type Martial Skill was activated, they’d still be much faster than a normal human’s running speed.

That’s why, they had been able to instantly break through the encirclement of the Punpuns.

Though the riverside with lots of stones couldn’t be called a good foothold but since it didn’t have obstacles like branches in the forest, one could run away faster as long as he stays careful with his footing.

Blessed with a good terrain, they had been able to run away safely till here with [Air Walker].

Though, the fact that they had lost their breath while just using [Air Walker] like this, it was obvious that it was useless in an actual battle.

“Say, it should be fine to return now right?”

“No, they might still be fighting. Let’s wait a bit more.”

They didn't know the situation at the camp from here. They could only rely on their intuition to decide when the battle would be over.

"Couldn't that troublesome delusional prince just die already? "

"If he does, then I'll hire Seria-chan."

"Hah, I'll hire her."

After that, the four got fired up while talking about what kind of services they would ask for after hiring her.

But, coincidentally, it was only an instant but,

"Giyahaha——ha?"

One of the boys laughing at a vulgar gag realized a giant black shadow in his vision.

"Ha, what.....is that?"

"Aah?"

The other three also looked in the same direction as the boy who had a frozen expression.

There, a giant beast was standing.

Its giant frame was over 6m but they didn't know just for how long that beast had been silently standing near the river over there.

Its blackish fur was difficult to see in the night but the deep crimson fur at its arms and chest could be clearly seen as if it was a bonfire.

Especially, the two long and narrow ears above its head looked like swaying flames.

"That's a monster, right?"

"It's fucking big.....isn't this dangerous?"

Due to those ears, they ended up associating it with the earlier Punpuns.

But, the impression it gave was completely different from them.

Arms as thick as a large tree, it's swelling muscles could be seen even from under the thick fur it had.

Especially, its sharp and ferocious face that looked like a mix between a wolf and a lion was nothing like the comical appearance of that rank 1 monster.

The giant monster that had suddenly appeared was simply staring at those four with its devilish red eyes.

"haha, doesn't that look a bit impossible to beat?"

"Yup, impossible, definitely impossible."

"O, okay, let's run away."

"Yeah."

The 4 who quickly came to the same conclusion began to focus their magical energy to use [Air Walker] like before.

At that moment,

——*gujari*

That kind of dull sound came to the ears of the 3 students.

Yes, only 3 of them heard it. The remaining one,

"Ha.....eh?"

Had disappeared after becoming a red blotch on the riverside.

The student who was supposed to be standing there had disappeared and in its place, a big black and red tree was standing there.

No, that wasn't a tree, it was the arm of the monster.

"Eh, why.....?"

All 3 of them unintentionally switched their gazes repeatedly from the place where the monster was standing and the place next to them.

The place where the monster was standing disappeared like a mirage, and now,

“Ah, a, waaaaaaaaaaaaahhh!!?”

Was definitely, actually, standing beside them.

Finally, after all this time, they realized what had happened.

One of their colleagues had been completely smashed from the head by the arm of this monster and had become a compressed pile of flesh and blood.

“Uaaaaah!!”

While shouting, trying to run away from this nightmarish monster, the three instinctively jumped away from there.

Because one of them had tried moving back without thinking, his leg twisted and fell down.

One had quickly jumped away and created some distance between them.

The other one had been the only one to have miraculously succeeded in activating [Air Walker] and jumped away into the air by kicking the earth.

But, this one who should have been the most successful in getting away had his body stopped in mid-air.

“Nggunnn~~!?!”

Basically, before he could completely fly into the air, the monster had grabbed him with its arm.

The monster was firmly holding onto the boy's lower half. On its right arm, a crimson crystal was glowing brightly. The two who had not been targeted clearly saw it.

Without minding the gazes of those 2 at all, the monster was completely focused on the one it had captured.

It brought its right arm that had captured the boy near its own head slowly at ease.

He'll be eaten, the other two instantly thought that but reality was different.

He was crushed.

The monster had crushed the boy's body inside its palm.

As if it was squeezing an orange, blood gushed out of its rock-like palm.

The red blood drops slowly disappeared inside the monster's giant mouth.

"Uguu, oooooooooeehh!"

Even in the dark night, the two who had witnessed this scene somehow puked with the exact same timing.

Their friend who had been conversing with them only a few minutes ago had become a red juice and was disappearing inside a monster's mouth. Seeing such a scene that was nothing less of a nightmare, their sheltered minds as nobles simply couldn't bear with it.

"U, guu, aaaaaaa."

But still, without becoming unable to move, the one who had been successful in running away could be truly considered as well done!

The one who had fallen down there couldn't get up and could only release all kinds of body except blood and simply sit there while crying.

The monster, without trying to chase the one that had run away, turned towards the one who was crying near its legs.

After squeezing out as much blood it could, as if throwing away tasteless food scraps, he threw away the pile of broken bones and flesh.

The dull sound of that landing on the ground as well as the sound of the monster pressing its finger on the boy's leg came at the same time.

But he only heard the sound of his leg's bone breaking. Or maybe, the scream he made as if bursting his throat.

"Gyaaaaah!! St, stop——"

After a gap of a second, once again the monster's finger attacked the boy's body.

This time, it was the left shoulder.

They were not sharp claws that could cut through human flesh by simply touching, it was simply pressing the shoulder with its fingertip.

Pressured by the rocky ground and the tough finger, a body that had been only slightly trained, broke very easily.

Once again, the scream of pain came. Maybe because it found that reaction amusing, the monster's lips twisted into a smile.

The scream that came every time it pushed its finger, the monster attacked the boy's body as if playing on a piano.

But soon, that voice also stopped coming.

It was obvious. Not just every bone in his body, every vital organ needed to sustain life had also been completely pulverised.

Towards the completely broken boy, as if slightly complaining, the monster snorted and turned towards its next prey without eating him.

"haa.....haa.....He, help me.....Help!!"

With shaky footsteps, the last one was running desperately.

But, without activating [Air Walker], he gravely lacked the speed to run away fast with such bad footing.

The monster slightly kicked the ground, no, lightly by its personal standards, the moment the rocks and dust blew away, that black and red giant body was lightly fluttering in the air.

It hadn't flown. It had simply jumped.

But that jump covered enough distance to be considered as flying and instantly turned the distance between it and the student to zero.

Meaning, the monster landed in front of the student.

"Hi, hiiiiiiii!?!"

The avatar of despair appeared once again.

Even while knowing he was no match, he still ended up drawing the mithril sword on his waist.

That blade shone with radiance as if warding off the darkness of the night.

“Ki, ki, I’ll kill youuu, I’ll kill you, I won’t be killed by some mo, mo, monsterrrrrr!!”

Seeing that beautiful blade, maybe his fighting spirit came back or he simply gave in to despair, the boy took a stance with the sword.

The next moment, the monster extended its arm casually but the boy couldn’t follow even that properly.

While holding his sword, without being able to move even a single bit, he was wrapped by the incoming palm.

In the time span of a second, his death should have been confirmed but the monster suddenly withdrew his hand.

For a second he didn’t understand what had happened but he realized that the edge of the mithril sword had grazed the monster’s hand and inflicted a small, very small wound.

“ha, hahaha.....it, it worked, it’s working!!”

The monster looked at its own palm doubtfully and found the small wound.

That moment,

GAAOOOOOOOONN!!

It roared.

That was clearly a roar of anger, a scream of rage.

As the monster roared, the crimson fur stood on its end and its body looked as if it had grown another size.

But, the boy had been unable to see that changed form.

That’s because, the moment it had roared, the boy had fallen unconscious while bleeding from his nose and ears. No, because after only a second had passed, the fist of rage had pulverized his body and he had instantly died.

After becoming a red blotch similar to the first victim, it was clearly dead even in the eyes of the monster.

But, the monster’s fists didn’t stop.

Twice, thrice, the fists that attacked were powerful enough to make the ground tremble and slowly, a crater began to appear.

After that, it continued striking with its fists and let alone corpse, not even a trace of blood remained when the monster finally stopped.

In a matter of time, its red fur returned to normal and its size also lowered to its original. It seems the monster's anger had settled.

As the monster stopped moving, the night returned to its calm where only the sound of the river flowing could be heard.

But the monster picked up a sound much far away from here with its long ears.

"I cannot leave them alone!"

That was without a doubt, a human's voice.

The monster laughed.

It confirmed that there were still preys remaining for tonight.

Chapter 199 – Rank 5 Monster

Wilhart and Seria were running through the thick forest with the shortest route down from mountain without even caring it was night.

The light source was the small glitter of 『Torch』, it couldn't illuminate more than some metres but under the guidance of Seria they were able to run at a high-pace.

「Paa!」

Seria's arm flashed facing the opposite side of darkness.

Along with the cry, sound of something falling also came.

After running for a few seconds, Wilhart caught the sight of blue corpse of a *Mina Tokage* lying on the ground.

In its head a black knife was stuck, it was killed in just one shot.

Like that, all the low ranked monsters approaching them were eliminated by Seria, so they haven't stopped yet.

「Wil-sama, let's take a shortcut」

Before he could reply, Seria easily took hold of the body of Wilhart though being thin herself.

Even if Wilhart was called as weak child, he had muscles for being able to swing sword and his height too almost reached 180 cms.

The scene of 160 cms tall maid holding him in her arms did seem weird.

However, Wilhart neither got scared of Seria's power nor did he complain for getting held up by her.

That was because, he trusted that the bodyguard cum maid, Seria from the bottom of his heart. *[ET: The cum is the latin word here not the english word]*

「Please don't speak or you might bite your tongue」

The moment he nodded, both of them jumped towards the slightly-elevated-steep-sloped cliff.

Even while carrying one tall man, Seria ran down without breaking her balance as though she were free falling.

Just like that, in an instant she finished descending and landed on the ground filled with grasses.

Till the moment Wilhart once again put his feet on land, he didn't feel the thing called as shaking.

「Let's go」

「Yeah」

And once again, their escape started.

They hadn't run for much long, but Wilhart was already near the point of having all of his stamina exhausted and would have fallen on the ground while screaming.

But still, he clenched his teeth and kept on running.

With his good brain he had derived that this was the best solution, so he had no reason to complain.

「.....Wil-sama」

Abruptly, Seria stopped.

While gasping painfully, a bad feeling passed through Wilhart's heart.

He knew that she wouldn't stop in place like this for no reason.

「Pant.....Pant.....W-what is it?」

「I will stall it, please run」

He sucked in a breath of cold air, his heartbeat sped up.

What do you mean, don't speak foolish things, fuck that——He had a lot of things to say, but he wasn't able to speak at all.

That was because he understood the intention behind her words though he didn't want to understand.

「—『Torch』 ثلاثاء تضيء شمعة ضوء」

Showing her back towards silently standing Wilhart, Seria activated the same magic which had been lightly illuminating the road.

The fireball rose up in the sky like fireworks, and a bright red flower of flame bloomed in the night sky.

That illuminated the surroundings greatly like a glittering chandelier suspended from the ceiling.

Thanks to the new 『Torch』, the surroundings became visible and they could finally understand where they were.

He understood that there was a half green vacant land, as though goblins tried to tear open the mountain forest for making a village.

「What!？」

And, in the center of vacant land stood a big-framed monster with black and red hair as though it stood there from the start.

Though he saw the monster for the first time, but immediately perceived that this monster was the reason Punpun ran away and they were too running.

「It's a WrathPun.....」

The person who murmured the name of monster in front of them was not Seria, but Wilhart.

「Do you know it?」

Seria knew the names of monsters not only within the surroundings of Spada, but also the names of all monsters placed in the monster list, even the latest ones.

But, she wasn't some monster maniac, so she wouldn't know the names of all monsters present in the world.

Hence, Wilhart, who even knew a lot about legendary monsters written only in ancient literatures, guessed the right name of this unknown monster.

「It is rare monster which only appears once in every 10 years」

The monster which appeared rarely easily meant that people didn't knew about them.

The place they were written was only the specialized books which told the mode of life and discovery of monsters.

Even among the adventurers, only those who do work of information gathering or were studious would have this much knowledge.

And, Wilhart was able to recall the description of a monster in a page of a ecology monograph coinciding with the traits of the monsters standing in front of him.

The name 『WrathPun』 might sound strange, but if one knew its ecology they would easily understand the meaning behind it.

That was because WrathPun was a mutated species that came from Punpun. Its temper was extremely violent, it goes into a frenzy upon getting even a little stimulus. It attacks the person who gave it stimulus and doesn't stop

even after the person becomes a dead corpse. It was a monster pertaining twisted rage.

Hence, it was given the name from the ancient language 『Wrath』 .

But, he didn't had time for telling Seria about its slightly revealed ecology, so Wilhart told her about the most important things only.

「The strength of WrathPun is Rank 5, that isn't someone Seria can beat.....」

The rank 5 monster meant, it had the power of a top-ranked, Rank 5 party, in its single body.

Seria was strong, to the extent she was entrusted the job to guard 2nd Prince of Spada.

But, she didn't had the power rivalling to that of rank 5 party.

「It will be fine, I can buy some time for you to run」

She must've understood it immediately from Wilhart's words that she wouldn't be able to win against that monster.

Even so, Seria declared as though she was just doing her job.

「Ku.....」

Wilhart didn't had words to stop her.

That was because, bodyguards exist only to protect the life of their master.

And Wilhart was the 2nd prince of Spada, not a person who was meant to die, even if he had to let others sacrifice their lives.

The royalty was something like that.

And Wilhart wasn't a child to not understand that, because he was already a 17 years old adult.

But, he wasn't mature to the extent that he could do the act of living while letting his bodyguard die.

「Wil-sama, hurry up」

In the words Seria, he sensed somewhat impatience.

In this situation where nothing could be done, he didn't even had time to be troubled.

「D-damn it.....Seria.....」

And, Wilhart finally made his mind, and tried to leave the words of farewell to Seria whom he had gotten familiar with.

It was at that time.

「『Anchor Hand』」

Numerous black tentacles extend from somewhere and twined around the body of WrathPun standing in the center of vacant land.

Just what happened here? Before he could even think that question, the situation changed rapidly.

「『Terra Wall Defan』——الـ جدار لـم نـع و ا سـع نـطـاق ع لى صـخـرة」

The Wrath Pun got covered behind the wall of stone, no the prison of stone which rose from below its feet while leaving space as to not interfere with the tentacles.

And, in the next moment,

「『Meteor Strike』——يـه لـك تـ حـطـم نـجـوم تـ ا لـق」

A magic circle of white light formed itself above Wrath Pun.

By the time they both understood that the magic system was completely different from model magic, the effect of magic circle activated.

WrathPun was bound up by tentacles, captured in the prison of stone, and from above its head the mass of rainbow-colored light downpoured.

The things just happened in an instant, and Wilhart and Seria were only able to look at it absentmindedly from the start to end.

Chapter 200 – The First Trial

The night watch is completely my work.

In the 『Beginner Set』 I bought in Irz village, there was a tent included.

Right now, Lily and Fiona are sleeping within it as if they were sisters.

This is absolutely not some sort of favourable treatment towards them because they are cute.

Fiona is a pure human, different from me, who has an excessively tough body.

As the theory of adventurers' says, it is natural and important for letting the members of magician class rest as much as possible.

And Lily has a child body, so she needs even more rest.

Lily is the strongest person in Element Master, but that comes with restricted time when she goes into her original form, in other words, her power is a lot unstable.

Even the little Lily is quite high leveled from adventurers' perspectives, but there is always a need for her to be in top condition for being able to return to her original form. 『Queen Beryl』 is not an omnipotent item which won't give any fatigue to user upon using its powers.

So like that, tonight too, I'm guarding in the night, alone.

We have chosen the center of an open vacant land as our camp ground, while looking at the bonfire burning besides me, the time passes silently.

Though it's not for killing time, but I'm improving and developing my black magic.

I have a user-friendly thing called 『Black Hair Curse 「Coffin」 』 so, I'm planning a more powerful and efficient magic formula for 『Anchor Hand』 .

The reason new ideas keep on coming to me can be because I'm clear-headed, or the black-haired maid in the gloves is supporting me.

I will be able to complete it by morning, the moment I thought something that much positive, I sensed some presence.

I wasn't that much sure about, it was more like intuition. I raise my head up and look towards the interior of dense forest in front of me.

「What is this feeling.....」

I am more sensitive to presences and magical power compared to ordinary people.

If there is hostility or bloodlust, so no matter if it is human or monster I can sense them. This feeling is something I had gotten familiar during the maneuvering experiments.

But, the 'presence like thing' I am sensing right now, doesn't relate to any feeling I have sense before, but is more strange.

For ascertaining the identity of that thing, I survey my surroundings more attentively.

In the next moment, a change occurred.

「.....It's shining?」

Thanks to my nocturnal eyes, I saw a small red light deep in the forest. Though it is small, but it isn't some hallucination, that is clearly being reflected in my eyes.

By the time I recognized it as mysterious red light, single prediction passed through my head.

For confirming I close my right eye, and the red light still is present like before.

But when I close the left eye, yes, the 'eye of god' given to me by Mia, that red light vanished as if a candle light just got blown out.

「So there is the trial, eh?」

I muttered, but the self-proclaimed god who appears anywhere at any time didn't appear before me this time and neither answered my question.

But, even without getting an reply from that child, I'm already half-convinced that the 'trial' for obtaining divine protection is waiting in place with red light.

Now, what to do in this case? I don't even have to think, the answer is already out.

「Fiona」

「Fuuaaii, what happenshed Kurono-shan?」

I call out while facing Tent and Fiona replies immediately, though in voice that sounds half-awake.

「Hurry up and——」

The moment I was about to say 'come out here',

SFX: GaaOOooooOOOOOoo!!

An intense, fiendish and sinister howl roared in the stillness of night.

But with that one howl, I understood.

That the master of this howl is more stronger than any monster we have fought till now.

And also, that the subjugation of this monster is the trial given to me.

.

.

.

From the moment we heard the howl which might have resounded in the whole Galahad Mountain Range, our movements increased their pace.

I didn't have to explain, but Lily and Fiona immediately understood that a strong monster has appeared in this vicinity.

I get rid of bonfire, sunk the tent in 『Shadow Gate』 and now the preparations for departing are done.

When I explained the gist of subjugating monsters we haven't seen before for completing the trials,

「We were increasing our rank for fighting strong monsters, so we are fortunate that it came to us by itself」

「Lily will work hard!」

I got their agreement with immediate reply.

I questioned myself for a second that if it was alright for my comrades to help me in killing the monster, but then I realized that thinking this isn't going to be much of help.

Anyway, I'm still half-suspicious about acquisition of divine protection, so rather than being suspicious of this and that it is more important to increase the party's experience.

「And so, do you know where this monster is?」

Normally, I wouldn't have known.

For following monster outside of vision range needs the use of special magic, which neither me, Lily and Fiona have learnt.

But, this time 'god will tell us', that thing will work.

「Yeah, just follow me」

The red luminous point is still being reflected in my left eye.

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. .
.

Now, in front of the light,

「.....There is nothing」

There wasn't even the shadow of monster let alone its figure.

I watch the point where the red light vanished while hiding in the shade of tree. There is only a strangely open vacant land full of overgrown weed.

Now this damn embarrassing, I was wrong, the moment I thought that, it appeared.

Instead of appearing it should be more like it came falling down. Before I knew it, the more than 5 metres tall monster stood in the center of vacant land.

「Wow, that guy is going to be troublesome」

It's not like I got scared looking at its fiendish appearance of black and red hair.

The thing I find dangerous is not that, but the fact that this guy appeared without any sound or presence even when it is having that big body.

I can understand looking at it once only that it has more power than that minotauros zombie and it's unhurried agility is like that of an assassin dancing in the darkness of night.

With just that much I can understand this monster that this monster is lot more powerful than a rank 3 monster which can be insta-killed by Lily.

「It's a monster I've never seen」

Fiona, standing besides me, says that calmly.

「I too haven't seen it, have you Lily?」

Lily too swings her head while standing near my legs.

Apparently, this monster is a first sight for everyone.

Now then how should we defeat it, the instant I thought that, shadows of two people came springing out in the vacant land where the monster is waiting.

「There were adventurers there?」

「Shouldn't it be more like they were being chased」

The two had a small 『Torch』 illuminating their surroundings, so even Fiona and Lily saw them clearly.

One tall-thin man is wearing a black blazer and red mantle, the outfit of elite cadets which Simon told me.

The monocle on his nervous-struck face is really impressive.

The other one is a perfect maid wearing the apron dress really stylishly. She is also showing a nervous expression.

However, she entered first while guiding the man behind her and holding dagger knife in both her hands, so she isn't just some normal maid but an bodyguard just like the girl stuffed inside this 『Black Hair Curse 「Coffin」 』 .

Incidentally, her well-ordered face is more like an older sister type rather than a teen girl.

「Are they the nobles who love to play being an adventurer?」

So optimistic, right, those bitter words come out her Fiona's frank mouth which doesn't twist words.

Well, from the perspective of a proper adventurer existences like them aren't good.

「But, I cannot bear to leave them」

Before I knew it, the maid activated more 『Torch』 es, and suddenly the surrounding gets brighter.

The maid steps forward and bravely takes her stance while holding dagger knife as if she were trying to let her master run.

From her stance, I can feel it that she is an expert even while being here, this maid is not putting on airs.

「We don't have time to slowly think over a plan right now」

No matter how much powerful she is, I don't think she will be able to fight against this monster which has long ears grown on head just like those Punpun.

She won't die in one hit, but it's not like she will be able to hold against it for much time.

「Well then, shall we bombard it once from here?」

「No, this is our rare surprise attacking chance, let's make use of it」

I recall the combo attack of my 『Anchor Hand』 and Fiona's 『Aur Soleil』 when we fought against 8th Apostle Ai.

It will be best to go with that this time too, after all it is best to go all out when we don't know the ability of opponent.

「But we have no means of protecting ourselves from 『Aur Soleil』 , so Lily will deal the last hit」

I convey my thoughts briefly and the two immediately show signs of understanding.

Well then, it will be great if we can defeat it with this one combo.....

Chapter 201 - Element Master Vs. Wrathpun (1)

Even though it was night time when the darkness ruled, in this vacant land that had been cleared open by some goblins, brightness similar to a normal day had returned.

Above the monster trapped inside the rock prison, Lily's [Meteor Strike] had exploded.

It was an attack that had taken down every enemy with a single hit till now, but,

“Oioi——“

Kurono saw the monster intercepting the oncoming rainbow-coloured meteor with its fist.

The moment the white magic circle appeared and [Meteor Strike] was activated, the monster had regained the freedom of its right arm that was bigger than the left and felt unbalanced.

It had simply used brute strength to rip away the black constraints and had blown away the rock walls surrounding it.

By that time, the mass of light had been fired with a speed like an actual meteorite.

The monster glared above itself and swung its giant right fist against it.

As the red jewel on its right arm, that looked like [Queen Beryl] shined, its right arm was enveloped in crimson flames that came from it.

And then the burning right arm attacked the incoming meteorite like an intercepting missile.

On collision, the rainbow-coloured light and the crimson radiance became a torrent of light flashing all over the area.

Kurono who saw that impact had to close his eyes due to the intense light.

But the scene of that monster hitting the [Meteor Strike] with its fist seemed too powerful.

And in the next instant the flood of light settled and once again only the light of the [torch] remained shining in the night.

“It actually defended against [Meteor Strike].....”

In front, in the centre of a crater with a diameter of few meters, was the figure of the monster standing free of all its constraints.

“Shit, this really looks dangerous. As expected of a god’s trial, eh?”

He complained like that, but there was no going back now.

Kurono jumped into the vacant land with Fiona and Lily. It was right around the place where that student and maid were standing.

“Ah, you are.....”

The first one to react to Kurono and the others appearance was the tall, though not as tall as Kurono, male student.

He looked extremely surprised, well it was obvious considering the situation; Kurono thought so and decided to briefly say what was important.

“Oi, we’ll take care of this monster. You guys should quickly run away!”

Since it was an emergency situation, Kurono didn’t use the polite form of talking and spoke so with a strong tone.

“Eh, ah, but———”

Maybe he felt bad for making some random adventurer face such a strong monster, the boy couldn’t speak properly.

“Thank you very much!!”

But the bodyguard maid was able to take decisions cool-headedly even in such a situation.

She quickly put her master on her shoulder and turned her back to run away towards Kurono and others while leaving a simple word of gratitude.

Of course, Kurono had no intention of stopping her, in fact he’d be troubled if she didn’t run away.

“It’s a rank 5 monster called Wrathpun! Don’t think of beating it, you guys should also quickly run away!!”

While being carried by the maid, the boy shouted so.

Kurono ended up smiling due to those words of consideration.

“So its called a Wrathpun. Is it an evolved form of Punpun?”

That’s quite a ferocious kind of evolution it went through. Thinking of such things nonchalantly, Kurono faced the rank 5 monster.

“Sorry Kurono, I wasn’t able to finish it off.”

Lining on his right side while apologising was Lily who had already turned to her girl form and was covered by her green [Oracle Field].

“No, that thing used flames. It must be quite resistance towards heat. It was only a problem of compatibility.”

When monster itself uses flames or lightning, in most cases it is also highly resistant to that element.

This Wrathpun was also no exception to that. In fact, since it’s a rank 5, its resistance should be strong enough to almost nullify the effects.

“Then that means I also have a bad compatibility with it.”

Lining by his left was the berserk witch that could turn everything to ashes, Fiona.

Certainly, since it had been able to take on [Meteor Strike] without losing any of its limbs, [Aur Soleil] would not have been able to defeat it either.

“We are at a disadvantage against monsters with heat resistance eh? Well, we found one of the biggest weaknesses of our party.”

That doesn’t mean that they could fix that right now though.

“It can’t be helped, I’ll have to cut it down. Lily and Fiona, you two cover me.”

Roger. The words of agreement came to Kurono’s ears from both sides.

In his hand, he already held his partner [HaraRetsu] and 10 blackened swords spread behind him like wings.

“Let’s go——“

Just as Kurono began to run, the Wrathpun’s red hair stood on its ends and once again raised a roar that echoed in the whole Gallahad mountains.

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As the angered Wrathpun raised an ear shattering roar, it showed that the [Meteor Strike] had done almost no damage to it.

Since the heat of the light of [Meteor Strike] had been almost completely nullified, the only thing that reached its body was the shockwaves.

If it was a normal human, no, even a minotaur would have been blown away by just the shockwave but the Wrathpun was a power type monster that held high resistance against shock type attacks.

(“But what about slashing attacks?”)

No monster is omnipotent. If it has some strengths, it’ll also have weaknesses.

The Wrathpun looked like a thick furred bear or a gorilla, a demonic beast so as to say.

That fur and muscles held high resistance to shock and striking type damage but a slash from a sharp blade should be effective going by the theory on monsters.

Conversely speaking, if the enemy was a skeleton that held no muscles or flesh or a monster with hard scales or shell, shock based attacks will be more effective than slashes.

If it was Kurono’s [HaraRetsu] that had cut through all kinds of things till now, even if it was a rank 5 monster, it should be able to cut through this monster’s flesh.

But, the Wrathpun wasn't going to wait for Kurono to come and cut it.

There was still quite a distance between the two but as the Wrathpun raised its arm, flames began to concentrate in its palms.

("Is it going to use a fireball!?")

That was, as if it was fire-type magic, a giant fireball formed above its palm.

And, before Kurono could come close to the monster's body, the flaming right arm fired the fireball with the speed of a bullet.

"——Black Shield!!"

Black fibres overlapped each other to form a defensive magic.

It's size was a rectangle starting from Kurono's knees to his head. In front of the incoming fireball, the black shield didn't look very reliable.

Probably, the Wrathpun thought the same.

It collided, then exploded. As black smoke and heat waves spread around, its lips which hid sharp fangs twisted into an evil smile.

Chapter 202 - Element Master Vs Wrathpun (2)

It was an accessory inlaid with a blue jewel like a blue marine.

[Protection of the Blue Flame – NanaBlast Amulet], that was the name of that accessory.

A magic item of Fiona that held an incredible level of fire resistance. The fact that it had protected Kurono from Fiona's [Aur Soleil] while fighting against the 8th Apostle Ai was a proof of its effectiveness.

On the night of the 1st of the month of Kouen, I had received this rare item.

"This is a present from me, please take it." (Fiona)

An amulet giving off a blue radiance was given to me.

On asking why, she answered that *I bought it*. No, that wasn't what I was asking though.

"It matches with mine now." (Fiona)

While getting embarrassed by those words that might make a man's heart misunderstand, I wanted to ask about the cost of this 'rare' item and all but,

"Th, thanks."

I could only answer like that honestly and accept it.

At that time, Lily's unusually cold expression was also scary.....

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As I cut through the fireball attack of the Wrathpun, I saw surprise in its eyes.

It seems it didn't expect me to get out of it unharmed.

Well, if I had not been equipped with this amulet, this unreliable robe would have been completely burnt through.

This present I received from Fiona is fastened to my leather belt through a chain.

Thanks to this, I was able to nullify most of the damage of the fireball.

The shockwaves and power of the explosion had been completely stopped with the help of the Black Shield that had become stronger with the help of [Black hair curse [Coffin]] as well.

As a result, I had only felt a slight heat and nothing more.

And so, at the same time as I got through the fireball,

“—[Speed Boost]”

Support magic came from Fiona.

My body became lighter and more strength came into my legs that were running and I became able to cover a distance of a few meters in an instant.

“——[Force Boost]”

And, as I raised my [HaraRetsu] to swing with all my strength, further support magic came to my body and increased the power of my Martial Skill.

“KuroNagi!!”

The Wrathpun took a backstep with speed unbelievable for its huge body and tried to escape from the black blade’s range.

But, my Martial Skill that had been enhanced in both speed and power; it could not evade it completely.

From my hands holding onto the grip, I felt the sensation of cutting through its gum-like elastic flesh.

The Wrathpun that landed after stepping back had blood seeping out of its left hand.

Its nowhere near a fatal wound but it proved that this blade could damage it.

Then, I can do this. We can defeat this guy.

“Haaa!!”

In pursuit, I took one step ahead and my opponent also rushed towards me while roaring in anger.

Its right arm raised and was enveloped in the same crimson flames that had blocked [Meteor Strike].

I instinctively realized that this flame was even stronger than the previous fireball and even with the protection of the Amulet, the flames might really reach me.

Of course, even if the flames didn't, there's a high chance that I'd be instantly KOed if I simply took on that battering ram-like punch directly.

“Magic Sword Arts!!”

I launched all 10 of the blackened swords without hesitation.

Wrathpun took them on without showing any signs of worry.

7 swords struck him. Shoulder, arms, legs and chest, the places were varied but all of them were only shallow wounds. It only evaded the attacks to its head instinctively.

Didn't work. It wasn't strong enough to stop its attack.

Even with the Glove and the Amulet, it was still dangerous to take on its fire punch head-on. Since I was unable to cancel its attack, I can only try to evade it now.

In my head, I remembered those days of the maneuvering experiment where I fought giant monsters daily as if it was normal.

In those days, I had no weapon, no equipment on my body. How did I face those monsters then?

Charging attacks that made the earth tremble, attack from claws that could sever even the bones, jaws that were inescapable once trapped in them, attacks that would be simply impossible for a human but truly normal for the monsters.

I, who had neither armour or shield, fought such monsters and had come out victorious. It was only because I had been able to always dodge all such attacks.

That feeling, fights against giant monsters, the theory behind it, everything had already been engraved into this body as unforgettable memories.

“Daah!”

And thus, the burning fist came down on me from above.

To dodge, I have to go neither to the back nor to the left or right. I have to go front.

Since the giant monsters had great size, places near their feet or bosom were out of their range.

Jumping forward in a summersault, I felt that I had dodged heavy burning attack behind me just barely.

The fire punch aimed at me had only cut through the air and hit the weed filled ground, gouging out the earth as a result.

With the moment of feeling the shockwaves hitting my back, while rolling, I slipped through the Wrathpun’s body.

My posture had collapsed due to using the Martial Skill but I still swung the hatchet while passing through.

Feeling a slight response, I barely cut the monster’s right hind foot.

I, who had slipped through to the Wrathpun’s back, stood up and took a stance but that monster’s reaction speed was really fast. In the moment I attacked its open back, it quickly turned towards me.

At that moment, the one that attacked its back wasn’t me but Lily’s light beams.

It doesn’t look like it caused much damage but I felt its consciousness move away from me.

A chance—no, a fireball seems to be concentrating in his hands.

“[Anchor Hand]”

From my left hand that was not holding the hatchet, I created wires out of the cursed black hair.

As the Wrathpun, raised its burning hand above and was about fire the ball of flames towards Lily, my [Anchor hand] entwined around it.

“Uooooooooohh!!”

I pulled the wires with all my strength but I couldn't win against its incredible physical strength no matter how much my body had been enhanced.

Soon, the wires started to get torn off and its right arm got free from its constraints.

But, that was enough.

The fireball that was fired was made to miss its target due to my intervention.

Without trying to see where the fireball flew, the monster quickly started pursuing me.

Pulling the remaining few wires still entwined around its right hand, I climbed up its giant body as if it was a mountain.

The Wrathpun shook its body to shake me off and I was swung around like an insect while holding on to it with my both hands.

Due to that action, my body flew in the air, and crossed 7m, i.e. right above the monster.

My body began to freefall due to gravity but I corrected my posture and released a Martial Skill in mid air.

“Kuronagi!!”

My aim was its neck covered with crimson fur.

Rather than its thick looking skull, it'll be easier to deal a fatal wound by cutting its neck.

If I'm lucky and am able to cut away the bones along with its neck, the battle will be over there and then.

And, the moment the black blade was about to reach its target,

GOAAAAAAAH!!

A roar loud enough to blow things away; it resounded in my head as if trying to destroy my eardrums.

But, that wasn't the only problem. The reason why I instinctively felt danger was because the parts of its fur that had been black till now also became completely red instantly.

But still, the swing of my blade wasn't going to stop, I have no intention to stop in the first place.

My full powered Kuronagi exploded against its thick neck covered by heavy fur and steel like muscles, which was still a weakness as a living being and was fully exposed.

"Guah, Hard!—"

But the sensation that came to my hand was the same as cutting through an armoured Knight's tower shield.

This was definitely not just my imagination. At this moment, the Wrathpun's flesh was similar to steel covered with multiple layers of defensive magic.

As a result, let alone cut its neck, my attack stopped at barely scratching its surface.

"——Are you kidding me!?!"

Wrathpun, that had become completely red now, the parts that had originally been black fur was now shining as if it was made of metal.

I who had landed after releasing Kuronagi faced against the Wrathpun who was giving an atmosphere as if it was wearing full red armour.

It seems, this reddening is not similar to the Martial Skill [Iron Guard] that enhances defensive power for only a short time.

Mettalification (T/N: I know no such word exists but that was the closest I could think of), should I call it? At least this change is not just some kind of bluff as it holds enough ability to defend against my sure-kill Kuronagi.

“So this is its serious mode, eh?”

Unintentionally, a cold sweat flowed on my cheek.

This Wrathpun that has high heat resistance to defend against both Lily’s light and Fiona’s fire, had now sealed the only attack that could work on it.

That is, basically, we have no means of beating it now.

“.....What the hell are we supposed to do now?”



Chapter 203 - The Sacrificial Maiden

Too many black wires wrapped around that huge crimson body to count. But to the monster, restraints of that level might as well not exist. There was no way that mere humans could stop it.

“Lily!”

As the monster broke the wires, Kurono called out his partner’s name. There was no answer; instead, countless bullets of white light came.

As Lily’s attack hit the WrathPun, there was an intense explosion large enough that Kurono was caught in it. Where those bullets hit, the impact on that red flesh was considerable.

The defensive strength of the WrathPun’s steel body was too great, and the damage was almost zero, but the WrathPun stopped for a moment from the shock. Kurono and Lily working together had only now managed to interfere with its actions.

But right now, just stopping the WrathPun for a moment was fine.

(Fiona, do it!)

As if she could hear what Kurono was thinking...

「——حادّة ع صا ال ج ل يد ال رمح رمي المجدّة جم يد」

Fiona’s chant finished at the perfect time.

—— 「『Ice Sagitta』」

Fiona was serious here, and while that was intermediate-level ice attack magic, it definitely had the power of a high-level spell.

As she waved her beloved staff “Ainz Bloom” a lance of ice that could freeze everything it touched came forth. Its aim was, of course, the WrathPun that Kurono’s “Shadow Wire Anchor Hand” and Lily’s bombardment had stopped momentarily.

Fiona would not have missed a human-sized enemy, and there was no way she would miss a 10-meter tall monster. The lance of ice headed towards the crimson-eared giant with perfect aim, and at the moment it arrived, the jewel in the WrathPun’s right hand flashed brilliantly.

“Aaaah!”

An explosion from the collision of the lance’s cold and the WrathPun’s heat assaulted Kurono, who was only a few meters away.

The area was filled with fog for a moment, and as it cleared, the large red figure of the WrathPun was still standing there.

“Shit, that doesn’t work either...?”

Distracted by the storm, Kurono finally failed to dodge that hammer-like fist. It was a serious hit, and he was sent flying backwards. He felt wind behind him, and flew through branches and leaves, until...

“Guh...ugh...”

Somehow he stayed conscious. He’d hit a large tree with incredible force. A normal human’s spine would have been shattered. Because of his toughened body, Kurono was able to get up again, but he’d taken significant damage.

His vision was fuzzy and his feet were unsteady, but he felt like he could still manage somehow. More than his stamina, the problem was the current state of the battle.

“Is there nothing we can do...?”

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The WrathPun is as tough as metal, so we switched to Plan B.

If my blade couldn't do any damage, then the only choice was to use a different type of attack.

Fiona, who could use every type of magic except for “light” and “dark” magic, was the closest to being an “Element Master”. If the WrathPun was resistant to heat, physical attacks, and light magic, then we just had to use a different type of attack.

To stop the enemy's movement, it took me in the vanguard and Lily as support: two people working together just to create a chance to attack. But the ice lance, using the element that the WrathPun was most likely to be vulnerable to, was completely ineffective. The original plan had failed. This Rank 5 monster was just too strong!

“Shit, what else can we do here?”

Quickly drinking a recovery potion, I felt strength returning to my legs. Without me at the front, Lily and Fiona would be in danger. I had to go.

From what I saw of the WrathPun, it wouldn't let us run away, either. It would probably continue to chase us even if we made it to a village. We had to stop it here, but we didn't have a method to actually defeat it.

We would just have to figure out a way to defeat it while fighting. My strength hadn't given out yet. We still had mana. There must be some way to bring it down.

Desperately trying to think of a plan, I returned to the battle.

「『Bullet Arts』」

The WrathPun was chasing after Lily like a child chasing a butterfly. Even if the bullets didn't hit, it would have to at least focus on dodging....or not?! It was completely ignoring me!

No, it wasn't even really looking at Lily.

"What bad luck!"

Apparently it was sensing its enemies by instinct somehow.

It wasn't facing me, it wasn't catching Lily, Fiona was some distance away but not moving...no mistake, it just chose her as its new target. Without me being close enough to use "Shadow Wire Anchor Hand" and Lily's supporting fire, we couldn't stop the WrathPun's movement.

But there was no way I could make it from this distance!

"Fiona, run!"

The WrathPun and Fiona moved at the same time.

Despite seeming to fit the stereotype of a magician that couldn't do anything without a warrior to protect them, she had actually operated by herself until she joined Element Master. To escape, she activated the speed-boosting ability 『Gallop: Air Walker』 like a skilled swordsman would.

But in this case, her opponent was too fast to escape from with that.

Lily and I desperately attacked the WrathPun with bullets and lasers, but it moved towards Fiona so fast that its huge frame was a blur.

Against the WrathPun's fist that could crater the earth, Fiona's slender arm raised her staff, and her defensive magic activated just before it hit her. It was the the strong rock barrier that had easily restrained the Minotaur zombie, but even that couldn't withstand the WrathPun's attack.

Fiona's body flew backwards together with fragments of the rock barrier.

"Fiona!"

She had been launched in my direction. Could I catch her?

I sprinted with all my strength. "Come on!"

I intercepted her in midair to offset some of her momentum, and ended up hugging her when we collided. She would have crashed into a tree like I did if I hadn't caught her.

"Are you OK?"

"Mm, I'm OK."

She's OK!

“Here we go! Lily will be in danger if we’re too slow.”

I can see the WrathPun once again targeting Lily, who was hitting it in the back with lasers.

Lily can fly, so it won’t be able to catch her easily, but she must be reaching the limit of how long she can maintain her adult form.

Child-form Lily can’t fly, and would be quickly caught if she was alone.

“Please wait.”

As I started to charge back into the battle, Fiona grabbed my worn-out robe to stop me.

“What?”

“I thought of a way to defeat it.” She had the same indifferent tone in which she usually used to say things like, “I’m hungry.”

“Really?!”

“Yes.”

There was no way Fiona would be lying.

“What should we do?”

“Please cut me.”

What?!

I didn’t understand at all.

I seriously didn't understand.

I'd enjoyed her occasional airheaded declarations, but this wasn't funny.

"What do you mean?"

She didn't immediately reply; instead,

『Rock Defense: Terra Wold Fan』 —「الـ جدار لـم نـع و ا سـع نـطـاق ع لى صـخـرة」

A large rock wall appeared that hid us.

"Just as it sounds, please cut me with your hatchet."

Right there, in front of me, she threw off her trademark black witch's robe. She was too fast for me to even be able to stop her.

In the middle of a life-and-death fight, I suddenly saw a girl's soft white skin. Fiona was scarily beautiful in her underwear. The situation didn't feel real.

All I could think was, "Do all witches have black underwear to go with their black robes?"

"Then evolution should happen."

I finally understood what she meant.

"You think my 『HaraRetsu』 will evolve from your blood...is that it?"

"Yes."

As it is now, my cursed “HaraRestu” can’t cut through that WrathPun’s fur and skin. But if it evolves once more and its strength increases, I might be able to break through that defense.

“But...”

“Take it easy on me so I just barely survive.”

That’s not the problem.

“No, in the first place, will it really evolve?”

It did seem close in that fight at Alsace. But it’s tasted the blood of a fair number of monsters, and it hasn’t evolved from that. So is it really going to evolve from the blood of one person?

“Didn’t you know? Maidens are the most valuable sacrifices.”

“Eh?”

“And I have a lot of magic power too.”

Fiona was seriously saying this.

My right hand holding the hatchet was getting so sweaty that I felt like I’d drop it.

“Are you serious, Fiona?”

“Yes, I offer my body to Kurono.”

I would really rather have heard those words in a different situation.

“It’s the only way to defeat that, hurry...”

Fiona turned her defenseless white back towards me.

Her perfect, soft, fair skin, me, damage it with my own hands? I was seriously against this.

After so many battles, my mental resistance to cutting a human enemy was long-gone, but this...? My heart was beating hard, and I felt like I was about to do something taboo.

And yet, in this situation, hesitation would not be forgiven. On the other side of that wall, Lily was fighting by herself. Fiona had the resolve to sacrifice her own body for this.

So I had to do it. After all, I was supposed to be the leader of Element Master.

“Sorry, Fiona. And thank you.”

And so, I swung my hatchet.

Chapter 204 - The Price of 『Queen Beryl』

The burning fist of the WrathPun had sent Fiona's body flying along with fragments of the rock shield she'd raised. As Lily danced through the air, she saw that Kurono had caught her. She wanted to go complain about the sweet situation Fiona was enjoying right now, and this red monster getting in the way of that was unforgivable.

Her gem-like emerald eyes met the ominous red-black eyes of the WrathPun. Lily understood that she had once again become its target.

“Daaaaa!!”

She continuously fired bullets of light with explosive power, and the sound of them detonating against the monster as they hit resounded, but the monster's advance was undeterred. Advancing through the flood of light and sound, the WrathPun reached towards Lily with both arms.

Lily evaded as she flew through the air.

Her flying skill had been enough to put the Pegasus Knights to shame, but because she was staying just out of range of the WrathPun's attacks in order to distract it, the advantage her ability to fly provided was relatively small.

Of course, compared to Kurono who could only run on the ground, being able to escape into the sky was much a better situation. But Lily only had a short time left where she would have that advantage.

(Crap, my time limit is already up...)

Lily has been drawing mana from the red crystal Queen Beryl to maintain her adult form. She was not yet out of her 『Life Drain』 scrolls written on dragonhide, but this monster would not give her the time to use one. So,

using Queen Beryl was Lily's only option, and now she could feel that the limit of how long she could use it for was approaching.

She had explained to Kurono that the limit was exactly 30 minutes, but she could sometimes last a little longer. It wasn't that there was a hard limit of exactly 30 minutes at which point she'd be forced back to her child form. Rather, approximately 30 minutes was the limit of her body's endurance in taking mana from the Queen Beryl.

To Lily, the activation of it felt a lot like running at one's top speed. It wasn't a problem for a short time, but fatigue quickly accumulated after a certain point.

"Ha...haaa..."

Flying through the air, evading the WrathPun's attacks while firing lasers and bullets of light at it, Lily's breathing was getting heavier.

(No, I still can't turn back into a child yet...!)

She could feel that the burden on her body was getting heavier, but she continued using the Queen Beryl. Against this powerful monster, Lily being in her child form would be far too dangerous. She needed to end this situation where she could only endlessly dodge the monster's attacks.

(Do you have anything, Kurono??)

Looking at them, she could see that rather than returning to the battle, they were hiding behind a rock wall that had appeared. If someone just saw that, they would think that her party was leaving her as a sacrifice to escape.

Abandoning members of a party in an emergency was a definite possibility with adventurers.

Normally, humans would prioritize their own life over that of their comrades in life-or-death situations. It was for that very reason that trusting in their party members until the very end was one of the things that set first-rate parties apart from the rest.

Lily had that kind of faith in Kurono.

She had lived her more than 30 years never trusting anyone, but now she had given Kurono all the trust that she had never given anyone else. She had even come to trust Fiona, who she had calculatedly brought into the party, a little bit.

(But if you're doing to do something, do it fast! I can't last much longer by myself!)

She had the responsibility of holding the enemy at bay with her magic, and the burden on her small body made her feel like she was running endlessly through a dark fog.

"Ha...haaa..."

And then, there was a small opening in her defense.

"Kuh..."

Lily was now too tired to deal with the WrathPun that could move almost as if it could teleport. When she noticed her mistake, it was already too late, and the WrathPun had grabbed her, 『Oracle Field』 and all, inside its two large hands.

"Ugh, let go of me!"

If a normal enemy touched Lily's 『Oracle Field』 they would be burned by its light magic. But for the WrathPun which had incredible heat resistance, something like that couldn't even singe its palms. It tried to crush Lily's barrier between its hands with enormous force.

“Guh...”

Faced with that intense pressure, Lily's 『Oracle Field』 started flashing violently.

「—— 『Radiant Force Edge』 ！」

For Lily who was focused on long-range attacks, 『Radiant Force Edge』 was the only method of counterattack she had. The two blades of light could cut through an opponent that was merely “tough” and burn them to a crisp.

But the WrathPun was the worst opponent for this.

The direct hit of 『Radiant Force Edge』 couldn't cut the WrathPun's hands or even fingers. Instead, particles of light spewed through its fingers like flowing water.

(It's no good, I can't escape!!)

Lily was trying to maintain her 『Oracle Field』 with all her strength, but the enemy was starting to break through it. She pushed back with an intense flow of light magic from inside, but the fingertips of the WrathPun's right hand were starting to come closer to Lily's body.

And then, those monstrous fingertips reached Lily.

“Aaaaaa...”

They had grabbed the rainbow-colored wings on Lily's back that were the trademark of fairies.

And then, those fingertips tried to tear off Lily's wings. Like a child trying to tear the wings off a butterfly, it cruelly pulled on her beautiful wings.

"Gyaaaaaa!!"

Lily's beautiful face was twisted in agony from this attempt to tear off part of her body.

And yet, she still maintained her 『Oracle Field』. Even as she cried and ground her teeth, and didn't know how many more seconds she could last, Lily wouldn't give up until the end.

(Kurono will save me...)

She believed in him, so she wouldn't give up.

(Kurono will definitely save me!)

Lily had faith, even in this hopeless situation. They'd lived together. Fought together. Her only partner, her beloved.

And so...

"Let go of Lily~!"

She was saved.

(See, I knew Kurono would come.)

Chapter 205 – Kurono Vs. Wrath-Pun

In the end, 『Cursed Grudge Hatchet 「HaraRetsu」 』 evolved by sipping the pure-blood of Fiona.

A diagonal slash on her back, the moment fresh blood touched the edge of blade, this big hatchet shivered in delight.

The abominable scream which I had been suppressing with blackening, broke the suppression and echoed within my mind.

Mixed within that scream,

(The last blood is filled, I too and you too have hurt people important to us with our own hands)

I, indeed heard those words.

Before I could understand the meaning behind those words, fragmentary images rise in my mind.

The hills and plains illuminated by the moonlight.

Countless corpses of knights lying down.

Knight in red armor standing in front of eyes.

The beloved person lying by her own feet.

The blade of hatchet smeared with the blood of that guy.

They were the memories of girl who swung this hatchet, no, it might be the memories upheld by this hatchet itself after becoming a cursed object.

The information mixed with noise, the situation of that time couldn't be understood precisely by me.

But, there was no doubt, that the hatchet in her hand gained more power upon cutting her beloved person.

「I see, so this was the condition for evolution」

Apparently, the expectations of Fiona were slightly different.

It wouldn't have evolved upon cutting just any girl.

It got the sufficient power to evolve only because of Fiona, who had fought with me till now.

Gaining power by hurting the comrades sure is a cruel condition—but, the power gained from that was great.

「.....With this, I can cut that guy into pieces」

The blade had gotten bigger if compared 『Cursed Grudge Hatchet 「HaraRetsu」 』 , the blade had already entered the realm of dual-handed sword.

It was black from tip of sword till pommel before, but currently it changed into a more ominous design with crimson lights in the shape of blood vessels which are pulsating.

Upon inserting the black magical power from the hilt, those red lines pulsate, a more greater dark-red aura rose, and it seemed like the hatchet was clad in fire.

This was the last evolved form, the true form of cursed hatchet which had the twisted love feelings of girl who had destroyed a whole village for a single man. The name of hatchet was 『Absolute Grudge Hatchet 「Kubidan」 』

「Leave the end to me, and rest」

I sprinkled the 『Fairies' Miracle Drug』 , which Lily made at the time of restarting the adventurer livelihood within Spada, on the back on lying-down Fiona.

I used up the small bag amount of it completely, and heal the gruesome injury which shouldn't be on a beautiful girl.

「Yes.....please.....」

While lying down, in a more sleepy manner, with eyes looking intoxicated, Fiona muttered weakly.

I take off my unreliable apprentice mage robe, wrap Fiona into it, and let her lie down.

「Yeah, then I will be going」

I shoulder the big hatchet, which I couldn't feel weight of and seemed like it had perfectly unified with my hand, then step forward.

That guy had already captured Lily and was trying to break the oracle field and Lily too with his both hands.

Reaching my ears were, the heartbreaking screams of Lily and howl of monster laughing evilly.

To the feeling of rage rising up in my heart, 『Absolute Grudge Hatchet 「Kubidan」 』 gleefully responds—Cut, cut into pieces fast, murder the enemy, kill all.

While maintaining my consciousness to the point I didn't get possessed by curse, I brandished the blade and shouted.

「Let go of Lily!!!」

.
. .

The blade finally was able to cut the fur of Wrath-Pun.

It struck the left arm, seeing Kurono attacking in rage, it quickly let go of Lily, and dodged, thanks to that it didn't suffer a serious wound.

「Are you alright, Lily?」

Kurono kept on staring at Wrath-Pun, but stood in front of Lily as though he were protecting her, and took a stance with the evolved-big-hatchet.

「I'm fine.....it hurts, but because you have come, it's all fine now」

Because he was showing his back, Kurono didn't realize the ecstatic and charming stare of Lily.

「I'm sorry, I used up all the miracle drug on fiona, so there is no more left」

Kurono clearly saw that Lily's upper left wing was halfway torn.

「No, it's fine, I will use my reserved one. But, I won't be able to fly for a while, and——」

Kurono understood that she couldn't maintain her true form now.

Kurono felt dazzling light flickering behind his back.

「No problem, I will take care of the rest, you rest with fiona over there, let me show my cool side now」

To the lines of Kurono which more than half changed into joke,

「Yeah, Kurono good luck!」

Encouragement in childish tone came back.

「Here I go——」

As though Kurono has his back pushed by those words, Kurono kicked off vigorously.

At the tip of his direction was the giant body of the red monster. It glared at Kurono with even more rage-filled eyes, that might because of the injury on its left arm or maybe because his toy got away from him. Either way, Wrath-Pun had no intention of letting the three returning back alive.

However, the same goes for Kurono.

Both of them shoot the deadly bloodlust at each other.

As though to oppose Kurono, who was approaching while brandishing the hatchet, Wrath-Pun launched its attacks first.

At that moment, Kurono swung down the hatchet.

Though the blade had gotten bigger, but there was still a distance of ten-odd metres, it couldn't reach the Wrath-Pun, at least that how it should have been,

「——Akanagi (Red Calm (at sea))」

But the blade of 『Absolute Grudge Hatchet 「Kubidan」 』 reached.

The things which cut the body of Wrath-Pun was, the crimson blade formed from blood which were released from the pulsating black blade.

The new martial skill he learned by the evolution 『Akanagi』, created new blade using the blood it had sucked till now, and extended the blade at the time of slashing. It was a long-distance martial skill.

The blade left a crimson track of the same hue as that big body in air, and a severed slashing attack visited upon the body of Wrath-Pun.

Blood gushed out from the tip of the shoulder of Wrath-Pun, however, it only faltered for an instant, so it didn't suffer critical hit and continued its assault at Kurono in anger.

The distance between the two was covered in the time it takes for blinking the eyes once, all because of the speed of Wrath-Pun.

But, Kurono grasped those movements with his eyes, if he couldn't then, he would have been smashed by the fist before even lasting one minute after the fighting started.

「Haaaa!!」

When the distance between the two reached zero, the point-blank range war time started.

Kurono unleashed the ominous slash of 『Absolute Grudge Hatchet 「Kubidan」 』 .

Wrath-Pun unleashed a ferocious blow covered in crimson flames. The numerous slashes left several red tacks on the body of the opponent. The blow held the power to smash the frail body of human in paste, but it wasn't able to catch Kurono, who was quickly and cleverly moving around. After evading the large-tree like arm which passed by his side, slight composure appeared on Kurono's face.

That was maybe because he has finally found the blade to kill the opponent, no, in fact, the reason was even more simple.

「Bastard, you're movements got dull」

Unintentionally, that murmur leaks out.

But, that was the answer.

The movements of Wrath-Pun were slightly slower if compared to when the fight started.

Apparently, the numerous attacks they had given it, affected the Wrath-Pun by reducing its stamina.

It wasn't that Wrath-Pun took on the attacks of the three because of its high defensive power, but it just couldn't help but take on the attacks because of the coordination attacks of the three.

Even so, it was standing on the dominating side due to the steel-like defense, to the extent that it might have won.

However, the problem of slight decline in stamina it had been ignoring till now, had become an issue now.

「Sorry to break it for you, but I have lot of confidence in my stamina」

Compared to Wrath-Pun, Kurono's movements were not dull even a bit. Kurono, who could work without eating or sleeping for a week, would not be less on stamina in fight for at least an hour unless he had used large quantity of magical power.

Kurono brandished the sword near the feet of Wrath-Pun, he showed the movements as though the fight had just started.

Looking from the side, it wouldn't seem like they both had different speeds, but, Kurono was certainly slightly faster than Wrath-Pun.

And, the blade in Kurono's hand which could cut the prideful defense of Wrath-Pun would become the main factor for the outcome of battle.

「Kuronagi——」

He used the martial skill he was familiar to, and with every slash he unleashed, the blood sprayed in air.

The monster who was accustomed to fight due to instincts, evaded the strikes which could prove fatal by a paper-thin margin.

However, with every cut, the damage was only accumulating.

Like that, the fight finally neared the end.

「Double Kuronagi——」

The moment he crossed the inseam of Wrath-Pun, Kurono unleashed two consecutive Kuronagi's on the monster's legs.

Unleashing two consecutive Kuronagi was simple thing, but it could be said that it revealed the power of the evolved form in a straightforward manner.

The two jet-black attacks, cut the flesh of monster the most deep than any attack since the start of battle, to the extent that it lost the standing stance due to having the legs cut.

Having the big red body lying in front, Kurono raised the hatchet overhead in an overbearing manner and was preparing for the next attack.

Kurono was sure that, it was the last attack which would end this battle.

In front of Kurono, the head of Wrath-Pun was falling, the hatchet was waiting like the blade of a guillotine waiting for the execution. *[ET: Fyi, the body is currently in process of falling... :P]*

「——Yaminagi (Darkness Calm)」

Compared to the time he used Kuronagi, an even more dark aura wrapped the blade.

Kurono felt that his black magical energy was being absorbed by the hatchet at a tremendous pace.

The red light across the blade pulsates even more fiercely while releasing more suspicious bright light, maybe it was happy because the magical power of Kurono was tasty and it was about to behead one strong existence any time later.

And 『Yaminagi』 was the most greatest and strongest martial skill of 『Absolute Grudge Hatchet 「Kubidan」 』

It was enhanced for the amount of magical power it sucked, and a wonderful powerful slash was unleashed.

Just like its name said, to sever the head of the enemy.

[ET: Kubidan is made up of 首(kubi)=neck,head and 断(dan)=decision,resolution. While sever/cut/behead is 断つ(tatsu), see the first character of this word is same as decision. So use your mind what the name means. Furthermore, 断(dan) can only be read as dan and only mean what I mentioned above. So I had no choice but to write the names as Kubidan]

「Ku!」

It cut the most resistant, iron like red fur, rip the bulky muscles, sever the bones, however, it wasn't able to sever the life too.

GuuGaaAAAAaaaaAAAAaaAAAAa!!

It was the second howl loud howl of Wrath-Pun, but this time it wasn't fiendish, rather it was the scream due to unbearable pain.

Wrath-Pun writhed violently, its right arm, the symbol of its strongest offensive ability was gone.

「I missed, eh.....」

Kurono exhaled a breath while muttering that. Beside him, the red right arm was lying down like a fallen tree.

The perfect timing Kurono unleashed the 『Yaminagi』 for a one-shot kill, Wrath-Pun protected its head with the left hand, maybe because of survival instinct.

It was really fast that Kurono didn't even see it, by the time he realized, the 『Absolute Grudge Hatchet 「Kubidan」 』 was already hitting the upper arm.

The left arm which was the most thick and hard, beautifully got cut by the hatchet, however, chopping off a single arm wouldn't lead Wrath-Pun to its death fast, neither it would lead to instant-death.

Not to mention, if it was a monster with high life force.

Fast, I have to deal the last blow—

Kurono tried to attack again, but this time Wrath-Pun was faster.

「Whoa!？」

Wrath-Pun stood up quickly, struck its hand in the ground, shovel out the earth with its might and threw it at Kurono.

That attack was the most pitiable one, but it certainly stopped Kurono.

Having land and sand flying at him violently, Kurono formed the Shield and took evasive actions by jumping horizontally.

On the other hand, Wrath-Pun showed its back and ran at its full speed.

「Ah——」

By the time he thought that it was already too late, that large red body merged in the thick forest of Galahad Mountain Range, to be more precise it escaped in the forest the moment Kurono said 「Ah」

「I-It ran away.....wtf.....」

The things left were, the three members of 『Element Master』 having wounds all over the body and the right arm[of Wrath-Pun.

The silence returned within the surroundings, Kurono ,who was still standing still in the vacant land with fresh signs of fierce fights, couldn't help but feel emptiness due to this silence.

At the same time, the 『Torch』 used by the two who ran away also lost its effect, now not only silence, but also the darkness of night returned.

In that darkness,

「Damnnnnnnn itttttt!! Fuccccccckkkkkk youuuuuuu!!」

Kurono couldn't do anything other than shouting while crying.

[ET: Our author has now learnt how to not be an ass always, but he will be a sadist. Maybe later someone else dies ohohohoho :P. Anyway, great anti-climatic ending for a fight in this novel]

Chapter 206 – Nest of Firedrakes

[ET: Firedrakes = Salamander. Author changes between both, so I also changed it from using salamander all time]

「Whoaaaa!?! What is this, what is happening here!?!」

The power idiot knight Kai, entered the nest of firedrakes and shouted those words.

Normally any one would retort saying 「Shut up」 , but currently everyone, even I, weren't able to retort.

That is because, the thing waiting for us in this nest wasn't the two-headed salamander but the heaps of corpses.

「C-Cruel.....」

Nell, standing besides me, knit her thin brows and turned her eyes away from the disastrous scene being illuminated by 『Torch』 .

Small or big, powerful or weak, the bodies of all sorts of monsters inhabiting within the Galahad Mountain Range, with their well-fleshed parts eaten, was lying all over the place.

Innumerable number of corpses, no, it must be the leftover food.

「What, so a salamander did all this?」

Charl, with her eyebrows knit, looked at the bloody spectacle, as expected of a firm-hearted princess of Spada.

「Nope」

Then Safi, the person familiar with corpses, told her result from observing the surroundings with a cool-mind.

「Salamanders are carnivorous, but when eating other monsters, they aim only for herbivores, while there are large quantity of carnivores mixed in this place」

I see, so even the powerful Salamanders, don't eat something that they can't.

「Besides, there are also plant-based monsters in there too」

While looking at the corpses of headless wood golem, and a mouthful bitten off Matango, I said those words.

「Eh, then what does that mean?」

Let's leave this idiot named Kai, you go and practice swinging the sword.

「Then, this is the remains of leftover food of a omnivorous monster, right?」

「Sure it is」

That also meant that the deed of eating all sorts of monsters while littering around the leftovers was done in this nest of drakes.

The salamander couple rearing children wouldn't have allowed this overbearing visitor to do its work.

In that case,

「It means that 'omnivorous monster' even ate the salamanders living here」

The proof of my words was in front of my eyes.

「This——」

Seeing that Charl gasped, other members too, more or less, weren't able to hide their reaction of surprise.

Similarly, seeing the unexpected spectacle even I was surprised within my heart.

In no way, the corpses of the rare-large-sized salamanders in pieces, could have been expected before time.

「Judging from their size, they are one」

Safi, being the most cool-headed person, inspected the bodies of salamanders.

The wings, tail and the rest has been torn into bits, but even those parts were bigger than normal salamanders.

Incidentally, parts about the size of young birds was also lying down.

It ate parents and children without exception, really makes me want to puke.

「T-Then this.....just who might have done this?」

Nell fired the question in a trembling voice, anyone would think this question.

「The strongest in this area is salamander, that's how it is」

「Yes, that's true, unless there is a irregular——in fact, this is that irregular, right?」

Just Charl answered to her question, this is one hell of an irregular situation. Places designated as dungeons, have investigations and research upon the actions of monsters, and do know most of the monsters inhabiting the place. However, for some unknown reason, sometimes a tremendously powerful monster appears.

「Now that I think about it, Wil was saying about monsters running from the summit」

「Ah, I see, so this is what it was!」

The fluctuations within the habitat of monsters, wasn't because of salamanders, but because of the appearance of an predating monster.

「In that case, it means we nonchalantly came to the nest of that strong monster, right?」

While raising an uncanny smile, Safi said some sinister words.

「Oh, that means, we can fight monster more stronger than salamander, ain't it great!」

「Kai, shut up for a bit」

Charl retorted one second faster than me.

「Onii-sama, shouldn't be head back just in case?」

Nell is right, in the first place, we came here to fight against salamanders. In short, our equipment was of anti-salamander use only, and couldn't be used to fight against some other monster.

Changing the equipment based on the monster, that is called as common knowledge of adventurers.

Holy water is useful against undead, but against salamander it won't help a shit.

「Yeah, but——」

I put my hand on the sword hanging from my waist, no a 『katana』 which is made in a peculiar way, and turned back to face the entrance.

「——To our bad fortune, looks like the landlord has returned」

There was a single monster standing there.

「What is that!?!」

Charl raised her voice in surprise. Even if she asks, what is that, I don't have the answer.

The monster which appeared without any sound, had smaller body compared to salamander, but the bloodlust emitting from it ain't no half-assed thing.

It had dichromatic hair of red and black, height of about 6 metres, sharp face like a wolf, and ears of rabbit growing from the head.

But, the most eye-catching thing was, the loss of right hand which seemed to have been cut off from the upper arm part.

Indeed a wounded beast, no, more like wounded magical/demonic beast.

「That is, probably, a Wrath-Pun」

「As expected of knowledgeable Safi」

This necromancer prodigy girl knows lot of monsters, because she had been aiming for creating the strongest servant from the good parts of every monster.

Investigation and research on monster materials can be said as a hobby for her.

「It is a rare rank-5 monster, by the way——」

Safi, while taking out her favorite spell book from the dimension she made a magic circle for with her hand, told a quite interesting thing.

「——It last appeared when His Majesty Leonhart, slayed it 20 years ago」

「Is that so, then today is a new record update for 『Wing Road』's subjugation list.」

At this time, all members had completed their battle preparations.

Me and Kai as vanguards, Charl and Safi as rearguards, and Nell in the end, this is our normal formation.

The monster with an odd-name of Wrath-Pun glared at us with fiendish glint in eyes, even while showing signs of exhaustion.

「I don't know who got you first, but unfortunate for you, you need to go down here」

Chapter 207 – Wrath-Pun Subjugation

On the 12th day of Red Flame month, second prince of Spada, Wilhart, was walking on the front street of Royal Spada Academy with a depressed expression on his face.

「*sigh*

He also sighed, as if the unhappiness was truly leaking out.

It wasn't an 「appeal to show exhaustion from heat」, but a truly depressed sigh.

This had continued since 5th day of Red Flame month, in other words, since the night he was attacked by Wrath-Pun and barely saved his life.

In the end, with Wilhart walking here and there around the school showed that he was saved.

However, the things he lost were too much.

First, the four other male students, all died.

And only the identity of two was confirmed, the other two had gruesome corpses beyond description.

But no matter how much gruesome death they had, as an elite cadet they too had resolve for fighting off danger, though this case was truly unexpected, but it could still be closed saying it was an accidental death.

No matter the reason, the elite course and knight course focus on fighting more, which in turns leads to quite a lot of casualties every year.

Hence, from the death of those four, Wilhart hadn't taken much shock.

In the first place they themselves took the actions of escape, so the responsibility falls onto them.

Running without thinking a monster might be lying in wait was a mistake every rookie adventurer did, just this time it went to the extent of death.

The person Wilhart was most concerned about was, the adventurer wearing apprentice mage robe and had a name 『Nightmare Berserker』 given by Wilhart.

The people who saved him from the situation where he had to leave Seria behind, were without a doubt him and his comrades.

If they hadn't appeared, Seria would have certainly died, he himself wouldn't have been able to escape completely.

In other words, it won't be an exaggeration to say him as the life saviour. And, that life saviour hadn't returned from the Galahad Mountain Range.

「Damn it, why.....」

Wilhart and Seria, upon reaching Dakia Village, rushed in the adventurer's guild, and made an appeal for reinforcements.

Simply put, this reinforcement appeal ended up as a waste.

After all, the time they finished preparations and were about to depart,

「Yeah, that Wrath-Pun named monster, we defeated it ourselves」

The party led by first prince of Avalon, Nero, the 『Wing Road』, presented the corpse of Wrath-Pun to guild.

Upon hearing, the time Wrath-Pun appeared in front of them, it was 'slightly' injured.

[ET: If just it had all the power, then we would have seen this damn party getting killllllllleeeeeeddddd!!!!]

Wilhart's good brain understood everything, that the party of 『Nightmare Berserker』 was defeated.

They stopped upon injuring the Wrath-Pun, and the glory for defeating it went to 『Wing Road』.

Their achievement of killing rank-5 monster was accepted by guild, and they were promoted to rank-5 adventurers. This turned out to be the fastest rank promotion within the history of Royal Spada Academy, it even surpassed that first prince of Spada, Aisenhart.

The party of congratulations for Charlotte was held by the whole Spada royal family, but Wilhart didn't feel even a bit happy at that.

Right now the whole school was excited on the achievement of 『Wing Road』 and was covered with praise and envy for them.

However, no one else knew, that an adventurer fought for saving him.

Thinking carefully, he too called him as 『Nightmare Berserker』 and hadn't known his true name.

That's why, he couldn't search for him though he wants too, and even if his guild card was recovered within the Galahad Mountains, he wouldn't be sure if it was his or not.

Wilhart, didn't even had the means to confirm their death let alone their survival.

It was just too much frustrating.

「Damn it.....each and everyone.....」

While walking the interior of academy, only the talks about the 'history's strongest' adventurer party reach his ears.

Not only within the school, but their rumours even exist out in the city.

In the first place, whenever a new rank 5 adventurer appears, it more or less becomes a popular topic.

And in this case, it was a party of elite cadets who reached rank 5 within less than 2 years, furthermore, it had first prince and princess of Avalon, third princess of Spada, and eldest child of Galbraith Family and Hydra Family, with this sort of people in the party it can be only called natural for it to become a great topic.

As a result, this news conquered the whole city of Spada more easily and sensationally compared to when first prince, Aisenhart became rank 5.

To the extent, it overshadowed the topic of serial murders of young girls which had been going on since a week ago within the city.

Without even 2 days passing, Wilhart had already gotten irritated on this topic.

He didn't had any resentment against 『Wing Road』, but to him the hero was 『Nightmare Berserker』.

Every time they were praised, without even knowing the existence of his life saviour, he came to despise others.

「*sigh*

Hence, a sigh.

The only person who could understand his feelings was, Seria, who also had her life saved.

That's why, Seria didn't say anything to Wilhart and was letting him be alone.

Wilhart too knew, if he remained depressed like this, it would be problematic for Seria as well as others too.

He had no choice but to return to his normal form, raise laughter, and live school life while crying within the heart.

And, if no one knew about him, then at least he himself kept the gallant figure of 『Nightmare Berserker』 with the innermost depths of his heart.

The moment he thought a thing occurred.

「Huh, are you perhaps——」

Somehow he was called out by a man he was about to cross by.

「Eh?」

Upon being called out, he instinctively let out a shameful voice, and raised up his head.

「You're really that student who was attacked by Wrath-Pun at that time, right?」

There stood, the figure of a man with red and black eye, wearing apprentice mage robe on the tone burly body.

Though he had seen him only for some time, but he hadn't forgotten him, he wouldn't mistake him for someone else.

「Nightmare Berserker!?!」

Wilhart raised his voice unintentionally, and seized the shoulders of man with an expression of shock on face.

「Eh, what? Berserker?」

「Wooooooo, you were alive!!」

The man without knowing he had an exaggerated nickname like Nightmare Berserker, just looked at Wilhart with perplexed expression.

Thus, second prince of Spada, Wilhart, and his life saviour, an adventurer named, Kurono, met for the first time.

Chapter 208 – Visitor in Fourth Laboratory

Existing about 10 kilometres away from Capital Daedalus, the 『Media Ruins』 was crowded more by researchers in white robe rather than adventurers in armor.

That was because the 『4th Laboratory』 established by 『White's sacraments』 started it's work.

In the deepest part of large geofront inhibit rank 4 monsters, but because the laboratory was set up in upper part, only somewhat of guards have been spread out.

At first the crusaders were doing the guard job, but currently the adventurers have taken that job.

Only because Sariel wanted an early stage opening of adventurer guild, the environment where adventurers from republic could work had been made. Setting that aside, despite being in a dungeon, here the research keeps on continuing day and night.

Especially the founder of 『White's Sacraments』 and the head of 4th laboratory, Bishop Judas, was extremely busy.

12th day of Red Flame month, this day was supposed to be the same as yesterday, that is to take analysis of ancient magic apparatus installed within ruins, but because of an visitor it was cancelled.

「Sorry for barging in when you're busy」

「If it is a direct messenger from St. Pope, we can't possibly sent you back」

The person who visited was a man with white hair, blue and black eyes representing day and night, and wearing a messenger's formal dress on his burly toned body.

On other hand Judas too had a big frame unseemingly of an old man he was, he had the dignity of an king of some country.

Just with having these two present there, the simple hurriedly built guest room, had the gravity of a throne room drifting within it.

「I don't think you have come here for just inspection, tell me the matter, 2nd Apostle Lord Abel」

And Judas knew, the person in front of him was the 'hero', with his social position camouflaged at the moment.

「I need a horse, a flying one would work better」

Abel didn't show any shock upon having his identity unraveled, neither did he ask him to not tell it someone else, just said his wish.

His speech was more informal compared to when he talked with other apostles, but he knew getting onto the point would be better when talking with the man called Judas.

「Fumu.....you cannot bring a sacred beast, I see」

From the few words of Abel, Judas understood the gist of the situation.

2nd Apostle wasn't called 『Hero of White』 for no reason, he had an horse fit for a hero in his possession.

But, because he had come to Pandora Continent as the messenger of Pope, he couldn't possibly take the 『sacred beast』 here and there without any problems.

「I will prepare the compensation of as much as you ask」

「Very well, take whatever you find to your liking」

Negotiations were immediately finished.

The other party was 2nd Apostle Abel, there wasn't any other person in the society who wouldn't trust him, bargaining against such a person was useless.

「Show me」

Judas replied with silence.

On his hand was a spider, which who knows when he summoned it.

It was a 5 cms long spider with long legs, but its body was transparent like a crystal, as if it was a delicate gem art.

A person knowledgeable in magic would suddenly understand that this was top grade servant used to record whatever it sees with highest accuracy.

However, it was improved by Judas himself, a person not close enough with him wouldn't know what it was highly efficient compared to conventional ones.

Abel too the spider in his hands, closed his both eyes, and started to concentrate.

Like that, silence dominated the room for five minutes.

Their bodies didn't move even a bit as if they had turned into stone statues.

The slight sound of breathing was the only proof of telling that these both were living humans.

「I will take the 13th black dragon」

Abel opened his mouth abruptly.

「It won't come cheap」

「It doesn't matter, I need this for going far」

Judas's answer was set to be affirmation.

This 『13th black dragon』 was one of the sons of dragon king Gaevinal, currently he was the top grade experiment material for research.

The usefulness of black dragon materials had been proven by the creation of experiment subject number 49.

Currently there was no one who had power exceeding number 49, furthermore according to the report from the group lead by Cyprus, he had shown growth far surpassing the predictions.

If he was able to make one more experimental subject with the same specs, then he might be able to complete a god soldier having power rivaling the power of Apostles 'without' the divine protection of white god, Judas thought that.

However, there wasn't any urgent need for it.

If 2nd Apostle Abel needed the black dragon then he had no objection to it, on the other hand, good amount of reward could be expected.

Hence, the words needed here weren't for rejection, but only explanation.

「The treatment of 13th black dragon hasn't been finished, there is a need for taming it with your own hands」

「I see, then I will start disciplining from now on, do you have some place?」

「The hall for mobility experiments had been completed just the other day, I would like if you don't break it」

Revealing a slight smile, Abel replied.

「I will keep that in mind」

That day, the hall for mobility experiment was destroyed completely, and the signboard of 'under construction' was once again placed.



Chapter 209 – Kill that woman

The party led by a young male warcat named Joto, finally cleared the quest for reaching rank 4.

They killed the monster after a fierce battle, by the time they took the parts used as proof, the day had started to sink, so they decided to return to Spada in morning.

They finally reached their long desired position of rank 4, party members were raising their voices of happiness, however, the face of their leader, Joto wasn't much good.

「What happened Joto, normally you would make fun of martial skills too」
The words of lamia swordswoman might sound like sarcasm, but there was hints of worry mixed in for Joto who wasn't in his usual shape.

His complexion looked bad, but during the time of fighting the monster, he showed leader like qualities while waving the newly purchased 『Fang Sword 「Evil Eater」 』, so it wasn't like he got ill.

Neither did he take any attack of poison or other bad stats attacks because the monster this time had no attacks like that.

「Hm, Yeah.....I'm som'wat tired」

Though he had his consciousness, but the eyes with misaligned focus stir up anxiety in her.

「Ah, then hurry and sleep, I will change your turn for lookout as last」
The monster this time was the one which could consecutively launch several attribute magics.

Joto, holding the 『Fang Sword 「Evil Eater」 』, which could nullify any half-hearted magic attacks, showed the most achievements during fight, this was something every member agreed upon.

Indeed today's fierce fight might have imposed fatigue on Joto, thinking that it could be understood.

「Yeah, sorry」

Saying that in the end, Joto disappeared in the tent.

After some while, Joto abruptly opened his eyes.

No, his eyes and condition was half-awake, feeling the reality as a dream, it couldn't be said he was completely awake.

With more than half sleep head, he started thinking.

(Ah, damn it, again—)

His waking was the worst, he felt the anger rising up within his chest.

Recently, before and after sleeping and waking up, he felt extreme anger.

Not knowing exactly, but Joto thought he saw a really irritating dream.

And, he saw it today too 'just like before'.

(It really feels fuckin' bad.....)

He gets excessively angry, to the extent it wouldn't be exaggeration to call it intent to kill, wanting to kill due to seeing a dream was just unbearable.

Even more when today was their celebration day for reaching rank 4. they defeated the monster based on his great work, and nobody even got injured, let alone casualties.

Happy days like this were not so often, but however, he saw a dream, he had already seen the dream.

(Argh, Damn it, Fuck it! What the fuckin' hell is this, stop this damn irritating evil dream!!)

His mind went blank due to anger, at the same time, Joto grabbed the hilt of 『Fang Sword 「Evil Eater」 』 reflexively.

At that time the 'Not knowing exactly' dream changed into 'Clearly visible' dream.

There, scene of an ordinary highway was spread out.

Cloudless blue sky, overgrown green forest in right left, mountains, maybe Galahad Mountain Range in far distance.

Joto was looking down at the corpses of his 'comrade', whom he had never seen.

No, not comrade, more precisely comrade's'.

That's right, there were several corpses scattered on that highway.

(Fuck, I won't forgive you, how the fuckin' hell you kill my comrades—)

The unknown beastmen swordsmen and adventurer archers, were without a doubt 'my' comrades, Joto thought that.

Unforgivable, truly unforgivable, this adventurer party wasn't formed temporarily, but it was made from comrades that lived together in pain and sorrow, and had passed through many dangers, seeing them getting killed helplessly, really unforgivable.

However, they were not only just killed.

Every corpse had parts of body lost, this showed they were played with and then killed.

Who is it, who killed them, who killed my comrades—Joto tries to find the criminal with bloodshot eyes.

(Ah, that's right, it's you, you did it)

The person for venting out the anger, before he knew it, was in front of him. That was one woman.

Race was human, age around the latter half of teens, hair color was pink, radical skin exposing clothes with white as base, wearing various dazzling ornaments, it was that sort of woman.

(I will kill her, I will fucking kill her, she's one who truly needs to die!!)

He identified the enemy, and concentrated the intent to kill on one point.

That woman was sitting, defenselessly, showing her back to him.

I can kill her, it's my chance, my perfect opportunity.

And, in my hand is my favorite sword which 'I have used for many years now', with this there is no way I won't be able to kill her—These thoughts run past Joto's mind in a second.

(Die, Die, Diiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii!!)

His body leapt up like wings, the sword of fangs didn't felt like it had any weight as if it was a part of his body.

Just like that he swung it down, without any martial skill or anything, just normal power.

Cutting down the defenseless young woman gave no inconvenience to him.

Certain resistance, the feeling of cutting the flesh and bones reached his hands.

「Hahahahahaha! I did it, I finally did itttttttt!!」

Giving out a cry of victory, Joto woke up at that moment.

「Hyahahaha—What?」

Coming back to senses, Joto realized that let alone dream he even wasn't in the tent he was supposed to be sleeping within.

「Huh, I.....」

He surveyed the surroundings, there was the scene of big trees of Great Forest of Latifundia lined up, however it was the place where his comrades had put up the tent.

Then he finally felt weight in his right hand, looked like he was holding the 『Fang Sword 「Evil Eater」 』 in reality too just as he was holding it in his dream.

And, he also saw dark red blood sticking to the broad blade of fangs.

「Eh, huh, what is this——」

Just what did I cut? The answer to that question was right down his feet.

Lying face-down was, Lamia swordswoman.

There wasn't even a need to think whether she was alive or not, after all she was cut from the shoulder till the waist area in a diagonal way, her body was completely separated.

Immaterial monsters like slime then it might be possible, but a human shaped race, upon getting bisected, hasn't lived.

Instant death, it could understood at just a glance, even more upon being an adventurer.

「O-Oi, 'tis a lie, right, what the hell, what the fucking hell is this」

Joto understood even when wanting not to, that he killed her with his hands.

「UooooooooooooooooooooooooooooAaaaaaaaaaaaaa!!」

He screamed while being greatly perplexed, at the same time other members noticed the abnormality and got out of tent.

「Oi, what happened!？」

「Is it a monster!？」

「Where is the monster!？」

The gargoyle archer and twin goblin priests surveyed the surroundings while holding their favorite weapons.

And, in some seconds they noticed, unbelievable but true, scene of slaughter in front of their eyes.

「Oi Joto, what is.....the meaning of this?」

Bisected body of Lamia, Joto standing besides her corpse with blood filled longsword, seeing that anyone would understand the situation.

「I-I didn't.....」

Joto muttered the words of denial while looking away from them.

「W-What do you mean I didn't, eh. Didn't you do it!?!」

Gargoyle shouted. Seeing his friend killed in front of his corpse, normally he would've nocked an arrow on the bow and aimed it at the criminal, however if the criminal too is a comrade he couldn't help but stop at just shouting.

「I didn't—That woman, I didn't do it!!」

Joto turned back, his eyes didn't contain light of reasoning.

On the contrary, deep red insanity filled light was flickering.

「Y-You——」

Then, finally the gargoyle and twin goblins reacted.

Through reasons unknown, the Joto standing in front of them was affected by some bad status and had gone insane.

The reason they were able to make that conclusion in an instant, must be because they had experience while reaching rank 4.

「Take stance! Joto is now a goner! Keep your guard up, there might be a monster with charm or berserk ability!!」

The gargoyle archer, while pulling the bow, increased the distance between Joto.

However, the fact they were within 3 metres radius of Joto, taking heed of their classes, was not a good thing, it was complete despair.

Archer and Priest, both are rearguard experts, the radius of 3 metres and less was the territory of Joto, a swordsman.

「You too are that bitch's comrades!!」

Grimacing his face in tremendous rage, Joto swung the sword while emitting murderous intent and hostility.

Moreover, his swing was more faster, stronger than normal.

「GuGyaaaaa!!」

Without even understanding the meaning of Joto's words, one of the twin goblin priests was slayed by the blade.

No chance counterattack, an admirable single strike.

No, even if it had time to counterattack, the mode of attack was magic, something not going good against Evil Eater.

Of course, it could use the wand in their hands to strike but, it would be broken into two easily.

「Fuck, how did it come to this——」

「I won't forgive that woman, I won't forgive her comrades too, I will massacre you alllllllllllllllllllll!!」

Battle strength and compatibility difference was, to the extreme extent, hopeless.

The left gargoyle and one goblin had no way to survive in the current situation.

Even more, if Joto had enhanced power and speed as if under berserk.

In the end, within less than 5 minutes, there were 4 corpses lying in this camping ground.

And, the last one person, with a bloodstained longsword, walked towards the dark forest.

「Where are you bitch, where the fuck did you go.....」

Joto determined to find his sworn enemy, no, currently he should be called former-owner of longsword, either way the place he was heading towards with longsword in one hand was, City of Spada where many people lived.

Kuro No Maou

- Volume 14(incomplete) -

A Witch Never Loves

Chapter 210 – Feelings of Sacrificial Maiden

(POV—Fiona)

「Please cut me」

From the moment I said those words, my consciousness become unsteady as if watching a dream.

「Huh?」

Kurono-san, making an idiotic surprised expression, was cute.

「Just as it sounds, please cut me with your hatchet」

Even without repeating the words many times, Kurono-san would know the intention behind those words.

If the current hatchet cannot cut it, then it is better to evolve it.

Fortunately 『Cursed Grudge Hatchet 「HaraRetsu」 』 had sucked the blood of numerous crusaders and monster, it also had sipped, though somewhat only, the blood of 8th Apostle.

The evolution only needs a last spurt of blood, it was obvious from the theory of cursed weapons.

「——Then it should evolve」

The things I am saying and what I will be doing is only natural by remembering the opponent in front of us, this would turn into a plan to recover our position in battle, there is nothing strange in this.

A tact for Adventurers for passing through dangerous situation is serious battle with life on line.

However, my consciousness is dreamy, heart is beating faster, there is heat residing in the core of my body.

Just why, how is this happening? This isn't the time and place to feel like this.

Though I understand that, this hazy feeling of sinking in sweet dreams doesn't stop, it is irresistible.

Hot, my body feels hot, I have stripped the witch robe and am just wearing underwear, still the night wind doesn't help in cooling down the hot body.

No, though a witch, but I too am a girl of marriageable age, so by showing my naked body to a man it is only natural to feel embarrassed——really?

Kurono-san is not watching Lily-san, but me, only me.

Different from the time of festival, that time it was only slightly embarrassing.

But why is it so much right now——

「Are you serious, Fiona?」

「Yes, I offer my body to Kurono-san」

I'm happy.

Kurono-san is watching me, needing me, right now, not even Lily-san, but I'm helping Kurono-san the most.

Why do I end up thinking, why am I feeling so happy about that?

More than Lily-san, I did an ugly comparison, still why do I feel such a dark joy?

[ET: Yandere's words are incomprehensible by use normal people.

Furthermore, let's look at how someone turns Yandere!!]

With, arousal and excitement and self-hatred, the positive and negative feelings mixing with my heart, my consciousness becomes faint like a muddled lava.

「It's the only way to defeat that, hurry」

Am I speaking correctly right now.

I'm scared if I blurted out something strange.

So fast, cut me Kurono-san, with those hands, make me a sacrifice, make my everything your own.

「Sorry Fiona.....And Thanks」

My consciousness almost blew——due to too much pleasure.

I was prepared for the pain and suffering from the strike of cursed blade, but as if it all turned futile, useless, worthless, a wave of climax shakes my whole body.

[ET: Whoah, this almost turned R-18]

Before I noticed it, I was lying on the grasses upside-down while gasping. The diagonal slash injury should have reached quite deep, but, without even feeling any sort of pain, I only feel feverish.

I didn't feel any pain, rather amazing pleasure. Maybe I should question why is the feeling I get so different from by getting cut by blade, but right now I'm too much lethargic and tired, that I don't even want to move my head, and,

「.....with I can cut that guy into pieces」

The fact that the hatchet evolved and I helped Kurono-san, wrapped me with the feeling of satisfaction, and I doze off on the comfortable bed of grass.

Apparently, it took not only blood, but also lots of magical power.

However, I'm fine with that right now.

「Leave the rest to me, and rest」

Kurono-san said that to me.

Kurono-san gently applied the 『Fairies' Miracle Drug』, to which I send my drowsy intoxicated eyes to him.

「Yes.....please.....」

The fire-like crimson and hell-like black eyes of Kurono-san, looked directly in my golden eyes filled with lust.

His eyes looking at me, his comrade, with complete trust felt comfortable, that I thought selfish things like wanting to keep staring him for eternity. He abruptly turned away his eyes, which led me to feel loneliness, at the same time, a black robe covered my body.

Kurono-san gently wrapped me in the robe, which seemed like a hallucination of Kurono-san embracing me, and my body, once again, got hot.

Completely unaware of my reactions, Kurono-san shouldered the evolved hatchet and face his back to me.

「Then I will be going」

Kurono-san took a step, turned into a black gale, and disappeared.
With my dim consciousness, while sniffing Kurono-san's scent from the robe, I watched his fight to the end.

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. .
.

「S-So embarrassing.....」

I was not sane at that time, I calmly thought that while watching the bonfire. Particularly, after I changed the turn with Kurono-san, became alone, and was secretly changing my wet underwear, my heart was about to break with emptiness and self-hatred.

I have never thought it was good to cast a powerful telepathy protect before now, if I hadn't done that, Lily-san might have read my embarrassing thoughts.

If she found out that, in that sort of situation, I hold those—sort of feelings for Kurono-san, then at worst, I would be fired from Element Master.

According to Lily-san, romantic relationships are banned within the party, even the oblivious-me knows the meaning behind those words.

To me, Kurono-san is, a precious comrade, party member and leader. Just that much.

Even if Lily-san and Kurono-san become a couple, no, married couple, I should be blessing them, as a comrade.

That's why, I have no intention to hinder feelings of Lily-san, neither do I have any intention to break the rule of love ban.

However recently, I've felt that determination shaking many times.

No, this is certainly my imagination, that's how it is.

Chasing after Kurono-san with my eyes, getting sad and glad with his words, too is my imagination.

I have not even felt jealous seeing Kurono-san talking happily with that beautiful elf receptionist.

「.....Embarrassing」

Those are the feelings a lovestruck-maiden should have for her yearned person, these are not some feelings me, a witch, should have.

A witch never loves, who said these words, this might show the preparedness of mind of a witch in pursuit of magic, but these words are completely appropriate for the current me.

At that time, it was the delusions because I got scared and aroused and high because I was cornered by a monster in a while.

No, it in itself might be the curse of hatchet, after all there are sentiments of a twisted lovestruck girl residing in the blade, so there is more than enough possibility that the curse led me to feel like 'that'.

Anyway, I don't think anything about Kurono-san, after sealing these embarrassing feelings in the depths of my heart, there won't be next time they are revived.

The moment I finally regained my rational mind, I heard the sound and sensed the presence of someone coming out of tent.

Not even one hour had passed since I changed the turns with Kurono-san, but looks like he is already awake.

On the other hand Lily-san is still sound asleep—Ah, this means that, from now, I will be together with Kurono-san, right.

「Just too much embarrassing」

The third murmur of 'embarrassing'.

No, there is no need to feel embarrassed, Kurono-san and I are normal comrades, party members.

While persuading myself saying that, I cannot help but feel my heart beating faster.

Ah, Kurono-san is coming out of tent, calm down, will my cheeks redden strangely, will I break out into a grin.....I'm anxious, but I look towards his way with my intentional poker-face.

「Good Morning, Kurono-san」

Chapter 211 – The First Divine Protection (1)

Black and wide, that was the first impression that came up.

It felt like standing in dark night, but for some strange reason I couldn't feel the darkness, upon surveying the surroundings I could see.

「Where is this place.....」

There were round pillars lined up in right and left, there were also delicate ornaments lined everywhere, it seemed like a shrine,

「Welcome to Avalon Imperial Castle of Elrod Empire. I truly welcome you Kurono Mao」

But, thanks to that voice, I understood that here was a throne room.

There is only one person currently who would call me by my full name 'Kurono Mao', in other words, the self-proclaimed god, ancient demon king, Mia Elrod.

Mia, with the same figure as in my memories as that of a person with androgynous face, was sitting in a big profound jet black throne.

Looking more carefully, she was wearing the same black uniform and ever-spreading mantle, the same things she wore when we first met.

I, from a place on the lower steps of stairs, asked Mia.

「Just what does this mean?」

I don't get the situation at all.

After Wrath-Pun escaped, we decided to camp at some proper place for a night, then I changed the turns with Fiona and slipped in my sleeping bag.

Till here is clearly in my memories.

「You don't have to be that vigilant, here is inside a dream」

It feels just too real for a dream.

Even without pinching my cheek, I can understand that my five senses are working, magical power and sixth sense too for some reason.

「Appearing in dreams is more like a god, right?」

「Well, indeed」

Setting aside the fact whether it is god-ish or not, saying this throne room in front of me, is an illusion or a dream is more easier to accept than to accept it exists in reality.

Let alone, I was present in the Galahad Mountains the moment before. This has more persuasive power compared to saying that I got summoned 'again' to somewhere.

「So, for you to come out in dreams, what is the business?」

「Fufufu, that is, for giving you the divine protection as a reward for breaking through the first trial!」

You did it, congratulations! The words of congratulations and clapping from Majestic Emperor personally, resounded in the vast throne room.

「Ha, Ha, Thank you for that」

Although I somewhat predicted it, but upon being praised this much straight-forwardly, I sure am bewildered to a great extent.

Or rather, at the time of getting divine protection, do all have to go through this?

This neither has the feeling of nervousness nor happiness, which I certainly felt when I got my graduation certificate in middle school.

「Though it is divine protection, it is not that much of great power, yet」

Well, that's true.

Certainly Wrath-Pun was strong foe, but fights with life on stake, is an experience many adventurers have gone through.

I never had thought that I would get tremendous power to defeat an apostle by just experiencing a situation like this for once.

「So, if I keep on completing the trials in order, the power of divine protection will increase?」

「That's right! Though I cannot explain in much details」

Like that, Mia stopped for a beat, changed her expression to a serious one and continued her words.

「Come on, Kurono Mao, present the proof that you overcome the trial」

「Proof?」

「That thing you have in your hand」

Looking down, before I knew it, I was holding a fist-sized deep red jewel in my left hand.

I thought it was 『Queen Beryl』 for an instant, but because this was blazing wildly and also had different hue, I understood this is different stuff.

In fact, this is,

「Is this the thing stuffed in right-hand of Wrath-Pun?」

「Yeah, if you just show the proof the trial will be completed, it is not necessary to actually kill the monsters」

I see, so the jewel stuffed on the back of left-hand of Wrath-Pun was the proof for this trial, so if I just get this in my hands, the trial will be deemed as completed.

However, if the proof is head of monsters or heart, then I need to kill them with certainty, and if I, by mistake, smash them into fragments then.....ugh, need to pay more attention from now on.

「Then I will take that proof, the 『Fist of Wrath』 」

Mia held out her autumn red palm, the jewel slipped from my hand like sand and while emitting bright red light, it disappeared in empty space.

Without even having time to admire the fantastical change, the jewel called 『Fist of Wrath』 vanished.

So...with this I have given in to god?

「By the way, it has lots of magical power inside, so if used in as a material for weapon or item, you could get a really strong one, or if you sell it, you can get lots of money」

「Eh, you say that now!?!」

What an extremely regrettable thing I did because of you, You sadist!

「Fufufu, this is the payback for the rude thing you said about me before, that you didn't understand whether I am a man or woman」

Grrr, being a god you still hold grudges.....

「Well then, with this the power of divine protection is in your body」

Though you say that, I don't feel any change, don't tell me I am being deceived by this fraud?

「So you mean to say I can use divine protection stuff now?」

How the hell do you even use the 'power of divine protection'?

「You will understand it with instincts, the same way as you learnt magic, and though it is called divine protection, it's power is now yours, Kurono Mao」

Of course, you will be able to use it after waking up from this dream, she added on.

「I see.....so.....should I say thank you here?」

However, is it fine to recognise this child in front of me as a real-god from now on.

Do I have to amend my wordings, after all he/she/it is the ancient demon king whom everyone on Pandora Continent knows about.

「Fufu, don't become so tense, you be like you have been till now, I don't want admiration and offerings, unlike the prideful 『White God』 」

The moment Mia said the name of god which the Cross Religion prays to, I felt a tremendous intimidation coming out of Mia.

Though there is neither bloodlust, nor magical power included, but a strange power indeed is coming out of the body, that makes me want to bow my head down unintentionally.

Though a part god-like power are coming out, but now that the name of White God has come out, then I have no choice but to ask.

「Do you know about 『White God』 , Mia?」

Before I knew it, the mysterious intimidation was gone, and Mia opened her mouth while smiling.

「I do know, but, that is a secret, for now」

「So you will tell if I complete the trials?」

「Just a little」

Apparently, there seems to be no intention for telling the info of White God. Sadist, or rather, it might because of rules.

Well fine, the problem currently is not 『White God』 itself, but the crusaders who believe that bastard.

If only I can get the power to defeat the apostles and innumerable crusaders, I don't have to give a shit about God's problems.

「That's right, I will tell one thing」

「What is it?」 (Kurono)

「The reason Wrath-Pun appeared was me?」 (Kurono)

Because I was there to take the trial from Mia, that the Wrath-Pun appeared, no, more precisely it was 'made' for me. That's what I meant.

「No, there is no relation, the reason it appeared was complete coincidence, it's a part of how nature works. Like I said before, the God cannot interfere too much with the world, this works for all other gods too, we all cannot twist the fates」

「I'm relieved to hear that」

With this it seems like, there won't be a time when super-powerful monster appears for me to complete trial, and goes onto a killing rampage.

So, the monsters for trial, needed to be searched by myself, or I will meet them due to destiny.

「So can you tell me what the next trial will be, as a bonus you see?」

「Though you know the answer yourself. But, when you use divine protection after waking up, you will get the gist of what power of divine protection you will get and also what the future trials will be about」

Unexpectedly, Mia gave me a hint.

Special service, no, there must be something else behind it.

「The talk is over with this, see you later Kurono Mao, I will wait for you to complete the next trial」

Before I could say something, my whole vision became black, like that my consciousness drifted——

Chapter 212 – The First Divine Protection (2)

I woke up only to find myself inside the tent.

On my side, Lily, in her small form, is sleeping while making *suusuu*, lovely sleeping breathing sounds.

There is the presence of a single person right outside, Fiona has been doing the night watch.

「.....Dream, eh」

With somewhat absent-minded head, I mutter that.

But, I soon deny the words in my heart. Meeting with Mia in a black throne room, I remember that very clearly as if it occurred just right now. In that case, I will be able to use 'power of divine protection' now. However, let's get outside first, if the power turns out to be explosion type, it would be a catastrophic.

Without waking up Lily, I swiftly get out of tent,

「Good Morning, Kurono-san」

With sun of dawn at her back, Fiona does a morning greeting. Of course, she wasn't in her underwear form, but her normal witch clothes.

「Yeah, morning」

Her white body had been vividly ingrained in my brain, I, feeling embarrassed, try to greet like normally. I intentionally turn away my eyes from Fiona and survey the surroundings.

The morning sun illuminated the surroundings, the traces of fight last night are clearly visible. By setting up tent in this vacant land, we were able to pass the night and take rest too.

Either chasing the Wrath-Pun or going down the mountain, both cannot be done unless the sun is up.

「Are you still injured?」

I cannot keep on ignoring Fiona all the time, so I bring up a safe topic.

「Eh, Yes.....It is fine, now.....」

But, the person who showed unexpected reaction was Fiona, for some reason she blushed and turned away. For some reason, no, I get it, after all

the person who must have felt embarrassed upon being stared in underwear form was Fiona.

Wait, or rather, I even watched her embarrassing form and cut her—— c, cut her, does the injury lead to that, responsibility, etc cetera!?

「I, I see, it's good if you're fine」

While letting a stream of cold sweat running inside my mind, I was only able to return those safe words, truly, I am a good-for-nothing. Well, I wouldn't let Fiona do the night guard, even if it has only been an hour since we changed the turns.

Though I cut deep, but as expected of miracle drug, it healed the injury as if it didn't exist, now just if her lost blood is recovered, she would return to her normal healthy condition.

That's right, there should be no injury left.

「Fiona, thanks, if not for your cleverness, we would've been annihilated」

「At that time, I did what I could have」

She returned to her sleepy expression, and said as if it wasn't much of a thing. Hum, looks like the thing about injury was just me being paranoiac.

Setting it aside, as for my true feelings,

「But, people don't say 'cut me' so easily, yet you said it means you trust me that much, thinking that, I'm, that, happy」

It surely, isn't my conceit, if she didn't trust me she wouldn't have even said that.

「No, I am too am happy for being helpful to Kurono-san」

Fiona smiled saying that, the reason I wasn't able to look straight in her eyes, was not only the bright sun behind her.

Her smile was more fascinating compared to normal girl of marriageable age, seeing that I felt startled. Her golden eyes looking a bit feverish and excited, is certainly my imagination.

「Ah, that's right, because we defeated that guy, I am now able to use the power of divine protection」

Though it might be too much forced and obvious, but as to forget the presence of suspicious Fiona, I opened up a new topic.

「Divine Protection, is it? Now that I think, you did say it might be a trial」

Though normally if I tell that I met god in dreams and got hand over the divine protection, they will think I went insane, but I frankly tell everything to Fiona, who knows the situation from before.

I tell her about the things that happened in the dream quite vaguely,

「I see, conversing with god in dreams is a common phenomenon」

And she easily accepted it.

In this world with magic, the phenomena of getting oracles via dreams also exists.

「The jewel has gone from the right hand of Wrath-Pun, so it must be true」

I took out the only loot, the right hand of Wrath-Pun from the 『Shadow Gate』 only to find the crimson jewel on the back of its hand gone spotlessly. Mia said, it would fetch me a high price.....well whatever, what's lost is lost. Let's pray that the other parts of right hand, the fur, bones and stuff become good materials.

「So, what is the power of divine protection you received, Kurono-san」

「I will be checking it right now」

I'm looking forward to it, Fiona said that with an expressionless face saying she's not so much looking forward to it, well this is normal, she truly might be looking forward to it. Fiona's expression doesn't change but her feelings are truly great, my prediction when I first met her was not wrong.

「Well then, here I go——」

While Fiona looked over me from back, I increase my concentration in the same when I use black magic. According to Mia, the power of divine protection is now a part of my power, so there's no way I wouldn't be able to understand it.

「——This eh」

Sure enough, I was able to grasp that feeling pretty fast.

That was the feeling I hadn't felt till now, an unknown power. However, it is a part of my own power, I could use the same way I use black magical power that is present within my body. No, this is made with black magical power as the source, it would be better to say that it's nature changed and it 『Materialised』 in my body.

And I know about this ‘power’.

「『Black Flames』」

I hold out my right arm, and blazing jet-black flames rise out of my palm. My right hand, now covered in black flames from the tip of finger to shoulders, resemble the Wrath-Pun from last night.

No, in truth, I am able to control these black flames made from black magical energy, just like Wrath-Pun.

「Err, let’s go with Fireball」

With the newly gained flame of different nature, I immediately mix the magic and logic to control and use it. The structure of magic sequence is simple, after all I just need to make it into ball and throw it, the feeling is almost same to Bullet Arts. Like that, just like I imagined it, the cluster of spherical compressed black flames, completed its formation in my right hand.

I fire it in air, though not with same speed of Bullet Arts, it flew with considerable speed leaving a black trace and exploded in mid-air.

「Whoa, I can finally make my black magic go boom!」

I won’t let Fiona say 「It is plain」 anymore!!

Confirming my victory, I face Fiona standing behind me.

「How was it Fiona」

「Err, you have become able to make flames from black magical power」

That’s right. It’s not like, without the divine protection, the black magical power cannot make flames. The first person I killed, that young boy, was using flames without any divine protection. Till now I hadn’t been able to use different attributes with my magical power, but looks like this divine protection covers up for those lost parts.

「So you can only make flames?」

「Eh, Ah.....that is, right」

What, being able to create flames alone is not great!?

「Can you create lightning?」

「No, lightning is impossible」

「I see now——」

Fiona looks at me as if looking at some pitiable child.

In fact, wait, the way this talk is going feels to me like.....

「It is really plain, though being a power of divine protection」

I, at that time, thought that I need to complete the next trial as fast as possible, and strengthen my divine protection.



Chapter 213 – We are the, son of (omitted) Wilhart Tristan Spada

Though I got the divine protection, leaving Wrath-Pun alone is a danger, even without the jewel, the materials of a rank 5 monster would fetch whopping amounts of money.

Now that there is a way to defeat it, I have no intention of leaving it alone. Like that, instead of descending the mountains, we decided to pursue Wrath-Pun.....but, couldn't find any traces of it.

We didn't had magic or skill for pursuing a monster, neither had the information about its nest or movement route, so the result can be said as natural.

With somewhat disappointment we returned to Dakia Village, there we found some party made by elite cadets called as 『Wing Road』 had subjugated Wrath-Pun, hearing all that information the disappointment only got more profound.

Truly, lucky bastards, Wrath-Pun had lost its biggest weapon, the right hand, and was also terribly exhausted, in that situation even a normal rank 4 party would have defeated it.

However, letting the prey run, and have your kill stealed, is a normal thing for adventurers.

[ET: He's too much depressed, that he is using logic to persuade himself]

Let's give up being depressed thinking that I was unlucky that Wrath-Pun escaped, and they were lucky to have met it in that condition.

With this and that, on 11th day of Red Flame month, we returned to Spada with the right hand of Wrath-Pun as the only loot.

Thinking back, we finished our rank 2 quest for capturing Doltos, the hatchet evolved, got divine protection, all in all the harvest to not less.

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Next day, 12th day of Red Flame month.

Lily's wings were half-torn off by Wrath-Pun, the injury is yet to heal, so till the time it doesn't heal, the adventurer work has been put on hold.

We still have some quests left for reaching rank 3, for the time being the quests with deadline coming near have been completed, so there would be no problem in reaching rank 3 even if we rest for another one or two weeks. Though Lily is feeling no pain thanks to miracle drug, but it will take time for the lost part to regrow completely.

However, it wouldn't take more than a week.

The wings are composed of magical power, so even without using heal on it, they would regrow on their own, like the tail of lizard, on the other hand, the five limbs and other physical parts, just like human, wouldn't regrow. In that sense, the fact that limbs weren't torn off can only be said a blessing in disguise.

However, the figure of Lily without her half right upper wing, though she herself is not paying much attention to it, but it sure is not good on my mental health, I earnestly pray for her to recover fast.

In somewhat overprotective momentum, after making Lily rest in the bed of inn, I started preparing for next quests, and so I am trying to do what I can do right now.

Incidentally, I had thought of enrolling Royal Spada Academy, so I thought to take the enrollment application beforehand. On the noon of 12th day of the month, I once again passes through the splendid big entrance gate.

People are, as usual, just too much, today too it is crowded with students. En route, I noticed many students talking about 「Wing Road reached rank 5」 topic.

Apparently, by defeating Wrath-Pun, they had raised to Rank 5.

For, the hard-working honest 『Element Master』 it is a really not good thing, even more when the talk about Wrath-Pun's subjugation comes in.

I will tell the complete details to Simon, let's do that, the moment I started walking thinking that,

「Huh, are you perhaps——」

A slender tall youth entered my vision, wearing black uniform with symbol of elite cadets, the red mantle, fluttering over it.

Having red hair as if blazing brightly, sensitiveness filled face, golden eyes, with a monocle over one eye.

His expression was too much depressed one, but no doubt about it, he's the guy who was being chased by Wrath-Pun.

Though it was only for a short while we said words to each other, so he might not remember my face, but seeing him fine, I got happy and instinctively called out to him.

「Eh?」

Reacting to my voice, youth raised his head up.

「You're really that student who was attacked by Wrath-Pun at that time, right?」

If I got the wrong person it would be just too embarrassing, so let's confirm first.

Or rather, he looked at me with shocked expression, as if he saw someone who he thought had died, he stared fixedly at me from the top of head to the tip of feet.

What, did I really got the wrong person?

The moment I had that anxiety,

「Nightmare Berserker!?」

「Eh, what? Berserker?」

What the hell is that embarrassing name, I hadn't called myself that ever, right?

Is he thinking of me as someone else?

「Wooooooo, you were alive!!」

But, judging from this manner of speaking, looks like he didn't got the wrong person.

I see, he thought I was K.I.A'ed when fighting Wrath-Pun, well it was rank 5 monster, and I really got near killed, so his prediction is not completely invalid.

However, with this reaction, I don't know how to reply.....

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With this and that, after we congratulated about the well-being of each other, we self-introduced ourselves.

However, it would be good to say that I was underestimating the existence called elite cadets.

After all,

「We are the son of 『Sword King』 Leonhart——」

Let's skip a bit.

「——That's right! We are Wilhart Tristan Spada!!」

[ET: So wilhart for the first time got to introduce himself without being cut off at the end, though it's regrettable he had his most part of intro omitted]

That's right, in human words, he's the son of king of this city-state called Spada, in more simple words, he's a prince.

Near the benches set on the outdoors of Academy, I met with a real prince.

「Ha, ha.....」

However, meeting a royalty at first, having a fierce self-introduction, though didn't ruin the mood, but it did make me go blank in mind.

Or rather, if I did something bad, wouldn't I be executed for lese majeste?

「Fuhahahaha, what, don't you worry Nightmare Berserker Kurono, you are my life savior, why would I need to accuse you for a false crime——」

No, no! Prince Wilhart repeats the words two times.

I kept on lending an ear to his roundabout formal figurative speech, apparently he wanted me to talk to him in informal way because we were both 'adventurers'.

「Err, so should I call you Wil?」

「Umu, it's good like that」

Wil nods with somewhat happiness, is this the so called dignity of royalty? I think it's different.

「Well then, sorry to pour water on our destined and heart-moving reunion, but I should say this before, no, I should apologize」

「Apologize, about what?」

Wilhart suddenly stood in attention, then moved down forming a right angle, and bowed his head.

What happened suddenly, he's a prince, right? Is it alright to easily bow his head to some adventurer?

「Though being the 2nd Prince of Spada, I, currently, don't have the appropriate gold or treasured item for my life savior! Truly Sorry!!」
I immediately understood he was apologizing me, but it took me some seconds to understand for what he was apologizing to me.

「Err, do you mean you cannot give me reward though being a prince, right?」

「Indeed! Though I am the prince of Spada, the fact that I'm a single student in academy is also an unwaverable truth. If I was the crown prince like my brother, I could have given you treasures of gold and silver, also the prestige and medals, but.....I am only an elite cadet, without the fortune or status to give」

In other words, he wants to give me large amounts of reward money and medal, but the current him doesn't has the status to do that.

I see, though being a prince, he can't do each and everything with his authority.

No, there might be places where it is possible, but in Spada, without the proper social status and all, the authority and assets don't follow.

Something like, the son of a rich person doesn't has much money, sort of.

「No, I never thought to take something after saving you, so the feelings of thanks are enough」

「No, but.....however.....」

「First, raise up your head」

I cannot bring myself to let him keep the perfect right-angled pose forever, it would be same if it wasn't a prince but someone else.

With some reluctance, Wil raised his head up with a bitter expression on it.

「Don't worry about it too much, it would happen as long as we are adventurers, just this time the person I saved was the prince」

If I had saved some child from village, then I would've gotten his/her treasured item like, the empty shell of a cicada.

Things like this don't need something like that in return, these are done with good intentions and grateful feelings are more than enough rewards, but demanding for something in return can only be called as a vice act. This time, I was at most just depressed on having Wrath-Pun escaped, I hadn't expected anything in return from these whom I saved.

「For me, it's more than enough if I can save someone」

It's not some lip service, but the true feelings from the bottom of my heart. If I want something in return for my good intentions, it would be words of gratefulness and not some gem.

「I'm grateful for your consideration, Ku.....If I was the King of Spada, then I would've appointed you as a knight」

「Ah, no, I'm seriously fine so don't say that.....」

Not like I am aiming to be a knight, and will never become in one.

I do like my current adventurer lifestyle, if I got into a court service like knight, then at time when a monster for trial appears I won't be able to go defeat it due to my workload.

In the first place, someone like me with a flawlessly confidential identity of this world become a knight, at most I might be hired as a mercenary.

「What, do you don't even want status and prestige, you seriously resemble a freedom loving adventurer!」

Wil's word of praise hurt my ears, sorry, but the reason is not something that splendid.....

But amending it again and again would be inelegant, right, what don't dare to think that I think explaining it would be tiresome, it certainly is not like that.

「Understood, I will respect your intention, I won't do something excessive, but, if you want my power, I will do my best to help!」

「Ah, Thanks」

I'm thankful for you to say that, looks like Wil possess strong sense of duty.

「However Kurono, can you tell me one thing」

「What is it?」

His expression becomes serious, no, it was already serious with all the theatre play like behaviour, but currently serious expression went over one notch.

That Wil asked me,

「You're still a rank 2 adventurer, but, haven't you repelled that dreadful Wrath-Pun, and even cut off its right arm」

For the time being, I tried to tell Wil on how I repelled Wrath-Pun, by cutting our hard parts like cutting Fiona, et cetera.

「Nightmare Berserker Kurono, just what are you?」

Oh right, I first need to tell this prince, that I certainly am not that Nightmare Berserker.

Chapter 214 – Berserker x Alchemist x Prince

In early afternoon on 12th day of Red Flame month, Simon had finished his lunch, as usual alone, in his room.

Moderately resting after meal, the time he thought for secluding in laboratory, the room of door was knocked.

「Oi Simon, you in there?」

That voice was, without a doubt, of Kurono.

This building was a storage-shed-like place, but long ago, though small, it was used as a dormitory.

However, only Simon uses this place, thanks to her sister, furthermore there was no supervisor, so any person, not only Kurono, can enter from the entranceway.

During daytime only his room and laboratory were locked, so it was natural for the visitors, only Kurono, to knock the door.

Though it was a visit without appointment, Simon opened the door gleefully as though he was waiting for Kurono.

「Hi, Onii-san, so you came from Dakia already——」

Simon, who knew about Kurono's quest, said those words, but seeing Kurono with an unexpected being present, his body went stiff with the eyes opened wide.

「Eh, huh, is he.....」

He stared at the person standing beside Kurono.

A slender elite cadet with red hair and golden eyes, considerably well-ordered, but there wasn't something conspicuous in particular.

Still Simon, even without having any relationship with people in school, knew about him.

「Prince Wilhart!?!」

To Simon who guessed his name and status correctly, Wilhart took a bold pose by folding his arms and replied.

「Fuahahahaha, indeed, we are the son of——」

「Ah, I became friends with Wil just before, so I thought that we shall talk together, was it a bother?」

Hearing Kurono's words that seemed like 'My friend is with me, so can we talk together? ', Simon took an even bigger shock.

(Eh, what are you saying Onii-san, he is from royalty, and you're even calling him by a nickname Wil, how can you be so frank if you met him just before!?)

He wanted to ask lots of things, but he didn't want to give bad treatment to a person from royalty, though a student, so Simon while trembling with fear,

「No, not like I hate it.....well, umm, how about coming in first?」

Invited third prince, who for some reason appeared with Kurono, inside his room.

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Simon's room, which seemed to be originally a double room, had three men sitting on floor facing each other.

「Fumu, We too have heard your name, Simon Friedrich Bardiel, but it is more famous as legendary man, rather than a person from 4 great nobles」
With the tea given by Simon in one hand, Wilhart said as such.

「Legendary man?」

Just by hearing, Simon blushed, turned away and didn't even tried to reply.

「Kurono, you came to Spada just now, so it's natural that you don't know, actually Simon——」

Though it was a roundabout tone again, but Kurono lend an ear to Wil, who told carefully and politely, hearing all that Kurono learned the details as to why Simon was called the legendary man.

Since the start of Royal Spada Academy, he is the only person who got perfect scores in written examinations and a great zero in practical examination, furthermore it continued for three whole years.

「Simon.....」

The results of examination, were just like as Simon told before, a failure, so it was hard for him to praise him saying he was a genius to gain perfect scores in written examination.

Rather, when Kurono tried to think about the figure of Simon trying hard to use a martial skill he can't use under the watch of many people, he couldn't help but feel sad.

「I don't want to talk about that」

「No, sorry」

Having said that to with a pained expression, he could only agree to it.

「However, this is truly mysterious, Kurono, who says he's just a normal adventurer, and the legendary man Simon, are this much intimate friends」

「No, well Simon too is an adventurer, and many other things?」

「Eh, Yeah, that's right, many other things had happened!」

Kurono was told by guild to not make this case of massacre public.

Of course, it wasn't like they would be arrested by Spada army immediately, but it was an information which would definitely increase the anxiety and panic in the hearts of Spada's population, so Kurono and Simon both were restraining themselves.

But however,

「Fumu, it wouldn't be good to make light of us, with our power, we can understand any matter as if we had seen it with our eyes, that's right, with the help of this Secret Network. In other words, we had already known about the fact that you both are 'survivors of Alsace」

Wilhart hit the bullseye about the circumstances of Simon and Kurono.

「.....Why do you know about it?」

「Just a simple deduction」

What the heck is secret network, nobody tried to retort this.

「——You said just before that you came from Daedalus, and, I have heard from rumours that Simon, during temporary leave, went to Daedalus.

Furthermore, this information is surely confidential, but I have heard about a group of adventurers fighting in Alsace village in Daedalus against an army called Crusaders」

Apparently, this prince Wilhart knew considerable amount of information, Kurono grasped that.

Indeed, if he knew about the matter of Alsace, then it would be easy to guess that Kurono came from Daedalus and had participated in the emergency quest.

「I read the report, made by the testimony of surviving adventurers, about the fight in Alsace village, it seemed just too much absurd and nonsensical, so I thought it was a complete exaggeration, but——」

There, Wil used his index finger to fix his monocle, then continued.

「——Kurono, if you say had gone through all that, then I cannot say those are absurd nonsensical things」

The people who know the fight of Alsace, except the crusaders, were only 4 people.

Some hundred or so adventurers, fought against an army reaching thousands in numbers, dealt great losses to them, and fought a fierce battle, this sure can be said an absurd nonsensical story.

Let alone, Kurono and 『Element Master』, even Simon were only rank 1 adventurers at that time, so it was only natural that their testimony was doubtful.

Even so the reason they didn't conclude it as a lie was maybe because they gave face to Simon and his family, Bardiel.

At the same time, the messenger sent by Adventurers' Guild, and Spada army had known about the internal affairs of Daedalus, so they knew that battle of Alsace 'existed'.

However, Wilhart had seen the true strength of Kurono before his very own eyes, when he was cornered in a dire situation by a rank 5 situation.

No, he had only seen him fight against goblins, but thinking about the situation when he would've fought the Wrath-Pun his strength becomes obvious, and there was even more no reason to doubt after seeing the cut off arm of Wrath-Pun.

「We have increased vigilance starting from Spada fort in Galahad, for fighting against the mysterious army called Crusaders which destroyed Daedalus, however——」

Turning over his red mantle, Wilhart said.

「I still cannot get rid of this bad feeling, crusaders just suddenly appeared, we don't know about their internal affairs, in others it's an unknown enemy. However they don't accept your information, you , who have experienced a fight against them, just because you are of low rank. There I think this, that the hero who saved me from my dilemma, you , Nightmare Berserker Kurono, I have seen your power and have no reason to doubt it. At least, I, Wilhart Tristan Spada will believe you」

「In other words, Wil you want to know the fight with crusaders in more details?」

Indeed! You guessed right, Wilhart shouts with a satisfied expression.

Kurono hesitated a little bit.

The incident of Alsace was not something to be told to someone wanting to know out of curiosity.

However, Wilhart is one of those who knows somewhat information about crusaders, and feels danger regarding them.

And more than anything, he is the second prince of Spada, if things went right, then vigilance can be increased.

That was something that Kurono, even after raising his ranks, would not be able to do.

「Alright」

In the end, Kurono gave his answer.

The time he hesitated was about the time it takes to drink tea in a breath.

Is Simon fine with it? He sent a stare asking the question, but it seemed like he understood the advantages Kurono had thought, the only problem would be on emotional levels for Kurono.

No, it might be more painful for Simon, who lost his beloved Susu.

「I get it, I will listen with caution!」

And Kurono spilled it, about how adventurers repelled the army called crusaders in a countryside village called Alsace, and also how those adventurers were killed.

Chapter 215 – Lily's Route

One month was about to pass since staying in 『Cat's Tail』 inn.

Of course, during quests they don't stay in the inn, but it doesn't change the fact that they had stayed here the most since coming to Spada, one could say they had gotten used to it.

In one of the rooms of that inn, which was almost like their own house,
「Muu-」

Lily, wearing White Punpun robe as her sleepwear, was on her bed, sullen. She had even put on the long-rabbit-eared hood, if she lied face-down, she would seem like a child of white Punpun.

No, there were cuts in the back to let her wings come out of it, so even if she lie face-down, one could understand she is a fairy, there might be no idiot to think of her as a Punpun subspecies which grew wings.

Incidentally, wearing a fur robe in the middle of summer would feel very hot, and fairies are magical creatures who live naked all the years. Not accepting the effects by change in temperature is a characteristic of magical creatures, so of course even half-human half-demon Lily has those characteristics.

Besides Lily, wearing cartoon-character costumes, sat Fiona on a chair. She wasn't in her usual witch form, but was wearing thin black shirt and smooth dragon-leather hotpants, her appearance can be said quite rough or rather her underwear form.

Because Kurono wasn't here, neither she had any intention to go out, so she was revealing her white skin.

「Boorriing～」

Lily, without paying any attention to Fiona's sensational appearance, complained about boredom.

From her young sullen appearance, she would seem like a child, but she had returned to her adult form.

Lily was strictly ordered by Kurono for waiting inside the room for the regeneration of her wings, though she accepted the order, but things to do on bed are limited if not sleeping.

Hence, complaining about boredom can be said as the most natural result. As a result, Fiona said words gently, it was unknown whether she said it for Lily or not.

「Lily-san, I need some consultation」

「Consultation? For dinner?」

Lily looked at Fiona with suspicious looking eyes, the eyes on the hood imitating a Punpun's head too seemed to be glaring at her.

「No, it's not about that, in fact, it might not be something so big to be called as consultation」

「That's quite some evasive manner of speaking, well I have lots of time, so I don't mind talking about anything」

Though Lily and Fiona were females, but they both didn't prefer to talk much.

It may be either because of their natural character, or maybe because they were brought up in an environment without much interaction with other people, or it can be both reasons.

But, Lily and Fiona had relaxed their guarded long before, and now liked to have fun while chatting with each other.

The start of their friendship relation, goes back to the time when they both worked hard in the potion making in Alsace Village.

The reluctance in talking with Fiona, who could be said as her comrade and second friend in her life, had long gone for Lily.

Lily casually lend her ear to Fiona's words, along with the big rabbit ears extending from her head.

「We are weak against enemies with heat resistance, right?」

「.....This is more than enough to be said as a serious consultation」

Lily had thought if she didn't want to talk about dinner then it might be about the lunch they ate before, but Fiona's words crumbled Lily's predictions.

「I had been a solo adventurer, so I had dealt with various enemies with resistance to fire, but a monster with that much resistance was a first for me too」

「There were not many powerful monster in fairy garden, so I too can't be said well-experienced」

Both, who were born and raised in this world, understand their power which they had grown up with more betterly compared to Kurono, who was given non-human power all of a sudden.

It is an obvious truth that they both have sufficient power to go around as a first-class adventurer.

However, they didn't want to live as adventurer in correspondence to their current powers, but they wanted power to fight with rank 5 monsters on daily basis.

That's right, not only Kurono, but these two also needed power.

At the very least, Lily and Fiona, both had no intention of leaving 『Element Master』, even Kurono was aware of this fact.

「Shouldn't we both also try to think?」

「For becoming strong? Yes. Kurono will become more strong from now on, he had also gotten the divine protection of demon king, no, even if he hadn't gotten it, he would've got more stronger」

That's right, Fiona threw in agreeing words.

They weren't saying this just because they were intimate with Kurono.

Fiona knew about the fact that while preparing interception tactics in Alsace village, Kurono was improving his 『Anchor Hand』 and 『Shadow Gate』 at tremendous speed.

Raising the effects of magic a person is using cannot be said an easy thing to do, though Fiona had no way of knowing what sort of magic theory was inside Kurono's mind, but she understood that his black magic still had too much of a room for improvement.

Just like Lily said, even without divine protection, he would become more stronger in some other way.

「Adventurers have an absolute rule of making party with similarly strong people, right?」

Fiona nodded.

For example 『Vulcan Powered』, in that party only Vulcan was Rank 4 the rest were rank 3 adventurers, however they were rank 3 only in saying, in

truth they had enough ability to fight along with Vulcan, that's why the party continued to exist.

Naturally, in the case of nobles playing adventurer-esque game, there is no restriction like that, and they cannot be called 'proper' adventurer.

To unleash maximum power as a party, and defeating monsters of higher rank with incredible teamwork, can only be possible on having members with suitable power.

With hindrances, let alone showing more power, they wouldn't be able to even show their normal power, and taking a weak member in party is totally avoided as adventurers risk their lives.

That applies the same to 『Element Master』 too.

Kurono thinks of both as precious comrades, and Lily and Fiona too had constructed a relationship of mutual trust, with differences in degree of trust.

But 『Element Master』 was not a friend group but an adventurer party, if in future there happens to be a change in power relationships within the party, and they happen to not be able to fight along with Kurono, then they would have to leave the party.

And the kind yet strict Kurono, would agree their withdrawal from party.

「I definitely don't like not being near Kurono, not being helpful to him, doing that is more painful than dying」

Lily, without hiding anything, speaks out her intentions.

「I.....too hate it. I finally got a comrade I can trust, so I don't want to be away from him」

Lily was not able to clearly read the emotions filled in Fiona's words. Conversely speaking, her words were spoken in a condition she had protected her true intentions, which even Lily cannot read through telepathy.

Lily didn't knew what she was hiding, and was having a not-so-good premonition, but for the time being she set it aside.

「Well, this time the opponent was rank 5 monster, had high fire resistance, so it can't be helped we had hard time against it——」

In other words, if it was rank 5 monster on which light and fire worked, they could've defeated it easily.

「——But, certainly there is that 'something' needed to fill in that weak point」

「Yeah, after all we would definitely have to fight against Apostles」
Defeating an apostle?

If someone in Republic heard it, they would either laugh scornfully saying 「As if you can do that」 or get angry saying 「How many soldiers do you want to sacrifice?」

Fiona was also one of the people who gave same reaction, but since being a part of Element Master, she has to be determined to fight against apostles. Being in Element Master, fighting along with Kurono, both meant that.

「There is no proof that apostles would definitely come when crusaders come here, but, it sure is a problem when we don't know how much time we have left」

「Then let's expect more of Spada Army, they might buy enough time for Kurono-san to get complete divine protection and for us to gain more power」

In truth, there wasn't any means to know the movements of crusaders, so thinking about this can be said useless.

In that case there was no other way than to find a solution as fast as possible and become stronger, without paying attention to the time remaining.

At the very least Kurono, thinking that, challenged the trials of Demon King Mia Elrod which who knows when will end.

「Although, what should be do actually?」

Most probably Lily must be the one racking her brain the most.

After all, she had always used her extra magic till now, she had no route to learn powerful magic like other mages.

Fiona, used model magic, so she had made a goal to learn all the high-class magic of all attributes except Fire, Light and Darkness.

「Well then——」

However, Fiona point out an answer to Lily, quite easily.

「How about using weapons?」

「.....Weapons?」

Lily showed an expression of surprise and agreement as if saying she never got that idea, miraculously the head of robe too showed a surprised expression.

「It had been bothering me from before, but Lily-san has no class, right?」

Reflexively Lily took out her guild card and stared at it.

There normal information like 『Rank: 2』 『Name: Lily』 『Class: Fairy』 were inscribed.

After all this time, Lily, for the first time, thought it was wrong to state race name as class.

This guild card was made in Irz village, when she was in her child form, so there was no doubt that she stated fairy without thinking anything.

She felt hate and embarrassment to her old-self, by killing her feelings,

「You want me to become a witch?」

She chose to move on with the talk.

「I won't say only witch, but after setting up a class, get a weapon suitable for that class, how about this?」

However, equipping a single magic staff, won't be much of help to Lily who was already using the power of 『Queen Beryl』

「But, that's right.....a weapon I can use, no, if I can learn other magic, then I would have magic of different system from extra magic and my power would surely increase」

The more she thought the more possibilities she found.

「We would go to school after reaching rank 3, so how about learning there, you might get some new idea too」

「Indeed, I was only thinking of spending a fun school life with Kurono——」

Lily, had read many romance-based books with school as their stage, those books were left by the mage in the hut, in fact, Lily also held a secret admiration for places known as schools. (TN: Anyone remembers him/her, I seriously think that mage got something to do with Kurono)

She wouldn't go there alone, but with her beloved man going with her, her expectations were increased for absolutely no reason.

It was unfortunate that all romance novels that mage left about bonding between men. (TN: *%#*(&\$(&(#%@&%&@#)*&%) (EN: that mage is female.... damn yaoi &%\$*/\$#%& how were they called; fujoshi or something.....)

「——Right on, I would find the perfect class for myself」

「By the way, Lily-san, which class would you like to become?」

「That's right, how about Necromancer」

「I see, it sure is a surprise」

Fiona, who didn't understood Lily's fairy joke, the next moment tried to curry favor from Lily, who had now returned to her child form with a sullen mood.

Chapter 216 – Stratos Smithing Workshop

I'm currently walking in the industry area near the academy with Simon- it's filled with smithing workshops. Simon's favorite store, Stratos Smithing Workshop, is our destination. It's a tiny workshop, but the owner of the shop, Stratos, is a blacksmith with abilities on par with the blacksmiths the royal family hires, or so Simon says.

Our purpose for coming here is to use the right arm of the Wrath-Pun as material for making a new item or weapon. It would have been fine to deliver it to the Guild, but Simon said to use it for myself because it is a rare material, so for the being I decided to see what he wanted to show me.

"It might be late evening before I return"

"That's because we talked for too long"

Our conversation with Wilhart, the third prince of Spada, started with things about the Alsace defensive battle, then became about the Spada Army, then guns, then black magic. The conversation kept on changing topics before it became a normal chat. While talking about those topics, I heard about serial murders conducted by a sword-wielding beastman. We didn't hear about this until now because a week before, we were in the Galahad Mountains completing our Doltos capturing quest.

The story of the serial murderer is that the murderer uses a longsword, he only attacks young women in the dead of night, and he kills everyone with just a single stroke, the murderer has physical strength and is thought to be a rank 4 adventurer. The progress of the investigation performed by the 『Law Guardian』 is unknown, but from the information of a witness, the race of murderer is deemed to be a beast person.

The murderer is yet to be arrested, so caution is needed when going out at night.

"This area is populated, a perfect place to attack people, and really dangerous."

"But aren't only young women being attacked?" (Simon)

“Mistaking the silhouette of Simon in night as a young girl is 50% possible”

(editor note: fufufufu)

“That.....”

Simon briefly tried to refute, but he sighed and nodded- perhaps he understood my words were not a joke but the truth.

“But if I’m with Onii-san, it’s fine”

“I’ve also got a new gun.” Simon says, swinging his new rifle on his shoulder.

Incidentally it’s called 『Yatagarasu V.02』, its base form is the same as version 1 but important points we talked about earlier have been improved.

“But it could be an unexpectedly powerful enemy, it is said to be above rank 3, right?”

“Aren’t you worrying too much? There aren’t many people who can pick a fight with you, Onii-san”

I’m glad that he believes in me, but I wonder if I am I seriously worrying too much. I wonder if, after encountering out-of-norm existences like the Apostles several times, I’ve always been followed by a bad premonition of someone more powerful than me appearing in front of us.

But, because the murderer is a beast person, so neither can it be an Apostle, nor rank 5 monster, who would become the trials.

“In a time of emergency, use all your strength”

“Yeah”

While talking like that, the shop, our destination, came into view. It is a building made from reddish-brown bricks. And compared to other workshops we saw along the way, it really is small. But since it’s a workshop for forging iron, compared to common houses, it is a big building.

While thinking that the chimney part spouting out black and thick smoke must be the workshop, I hear the sound of Simon opening the door of the store.

“Yes, welcome.....oh, Simon-chan”

“Hello, Oba-san”

An old lady, with the width of a dwarf female, started a calm and mild conversation with Simon. She is sitting near the counter, but her height is somewhat smaller than Simon, considering the small height feature of dwarves, her height is average.

Her olive brown curly hair has been bound up behind her, her face has some wrinkles showing her age, and she is gently smiling. The smile is so warm it is probably not the smile of business, but a smile from her heart.

Well, this only shows that they have known each other for a long time since the contender gun he had at first and the 『Yatagarasu V.02』 he is equipped with right now were both made in this workshop.

“Oh, is that person perhaps.....”

The old lady pointed her gaze at me, from her reaction it seems like she has heard about me before.

“Nice to meet you, I’m Kurono, an adventurer”

“Ah, as expected, you are the so-called ‘Onii-san’ of Simon”

It may be my imagination, but for some reason, despite Her smile not being any different, I feel that there is some hidden meaning behind it.

After completing some talk with old lady she says,

“Okay then, wait for a bit and I’ll call him”

She disappeared towards the interior of shop, calling the owner of this Stratos Smithing Workshop, her husband. I didn’t come here to purchase a weapon, but the check if the right arm of Wrath-Pun could be used to make a weapon or item, and unless I hear it from the blacksmith himself, I’m not doing anything with it.

In my head I have the image of a stubborn, short-tempered & grim old man about a blacksmith dwarf. This is not just because of novels and movies from earth, but because the dwarf blacksmiths in this world are actually like that.

I talked with them in Alsace village, and during that the guild master Biin-san intermediated, so they listened to a rank 1 adventurer like me. Well, I'm currently a normal rank 2 adventurer, not the leader of the emergency quest. If I said something bad, there is a possibility of getting yelled at like 「Don't come here again!」

“I need to be very careful.” I thought to myself. While in thought, I looked around the store interior. In the somewhat narrow room, many types of weapons are exhibited. All are of simple shape, and thinking back, they are the same as the ones displayed on Mordred Weapon Company.

A sword with iron blade, spear and axe, all are weapons that novice adventurers can get hold of, there is no weapon with magic imbued in it. Wondering if this place is a subcontractor supplying weapons to Mordred Weapons Company, a single dwarf appears from inside the store.

“Yes yes, welcome! It's rare for a new customer to come here, so say whatever you want, and I will answer your questions as much as I can.”

A middle-aged male dwarf appears in front of me in a relatively modest attitude. His work clothes, blackened at some parts, showed the years of working. Looking at it, I can tell he is the blacksmith here. His height is average for a dwarf, and being a male he is slightly taller than the old lady.

“Ah, I didn't introduce myself, I'm Regin Stratos, a humble blacksmith, nice to meet you”

This dwarf named Regin, didn't have a long beard, which every other dwarf seems to have. If not for his physique and pointed ears, he would appear to be a short human male. With a hairstyle like that of a priest, drooping eyes wearing round glasses with black rim and a thick lens and gentle facial features along with thick eyebrows and big nose like that of a dwarf, he looks completely different from the stereotypical image of a grim dwarf.

To Regin, bowing in front of me while smiling I say,

“Ah, Yes, nice to meet you, I'm Kurono, an adventurer”

While being disappointed that my imagination was wrong, I, being a Japanese, reflexively returned the bow. No, well, this was quite an

unexpected reaction, I thought it would be like 「Who the hell is this baby rank 2 adventurer, don't you dare come here again!」

Well, if he is going to treat me friendly, there's no harm in that.

“Oji-san, we have something to ask today——”

Simon, the regular customer, intervened and explained the reason for our visit. This Regin person, not only manufactures weapons from iron and mithril, but also from monster materials containing magical power, so he might be able to make good use of the right arm of Wrath-Pun, or so Simon said, praising his abilities.

He showed an understanding expression with our brief description.

“Wrath-Pun. Now that's some old name, I still remember using it 20 years ago”

I'm surprised to hear that he has manufactured the materials of a very rare monster like Wrath-Pun. As expected of an expert blacksmith.

“But without the 『Fist of Wrath』 , manufacturing a single arm is insufficient”

“Eh~ no way~”

Though I won't raise a regretful voice like Simon, I am disappointed too. The right arm of Wrath-Pun is completely inside my 『Shadow Gate』 , so its condition is good, and using it as material for armor is no problem.

For making weapons from materials, they can be made either by using the materials as they are, like 『Fang Sword 「Evil Eater」 』 , or the materials can be fused with other metals using magic, called 『drilling』 .

I came here expecting the useful parts of the right arm being 『drilled』 to make a weapon which exhibits fire magic, but the jewel I offered to God Mia, has come to interfere as the bottleneck.

“I can use it to enhance an existing weapon, but, from the characteristics of Wrath-Pun, unless the weapon being enhanced has fire attributes, don't expect much effect out of it”

“Equipped with fire attribute means it has already become a magic weapon, right?”

Magic Weapons are pricey stuff, not suitable to get into the hands of a rank 2 adventurer. Yeah, I do have a cursed weapon, but never had a magic weapon containing power inside of i—

“Ah”

Then, I remember one weapon. That’s right, I almost forgot about it, but I’m holding a weapon containing fire magic inside it.

“How about 『Thumb of Ifrit』 ?”

Taking it out from my bosom, I handed it towards Regin, a single knife. This is the 『Thumb of Ifrit』 , a multipurpose knife, that has been doing covert activity of being a knife, igniter and ‘insect repellent’, since I have again started my life as an adventurer in Spada.

But because I’ve been using it as a tool, I almost forgot it could be used as a weapon as well. Though the fire attribute is faint, but it does have the attribute, using this is a lot better than using a sword as a base. Now he just needs to agree on it.....

“Oh, the 『Thumb of Ifrit』 , eh, I see, using it will not harm the ‘fire power’ of Wrath-Pun, and it could easily be enhanced”

The thick lens of the black-rimmed glasses flashed and he gave affirmation. Alrighty then, it’s decided.

“Then, please enhance this 『Thumb of Ifrit』 ”

Chapter 217 – Fiona's Spada Gourmet Tour Round 3

Because I had her rest at the inn, Lily spent her day sleeping and wasn't able to sleep that night. I do feel sorry about it, because it was a needless worry. For the first 3 days, with her torn wings, she had been wandering around the Galahad Mountains.

Her condition is good enough that she can move around without much effort, so I don't have to worry. I should have let her do her normal things without doing something that would put any strain on her, but now it's TOO LATE! Lily fell asleep around dawn, and wouldn't wake up until dusk, so I left her to sleep.

"Sorry Lily"

Even now, during breakfast time, while Lily is sleeping soundly, I say my apologies to her. However, Lily in the White Punpun robe is deadly cute. If she likes my present, then I'm also glad. Thinking about it, we left Lily the Sleeping Beauty in the room and headed to the dining hall to eat breakfast.

"What should we do today?"

While exchanging morning greetings with Fiona, we sat at a table and talked about our plans. Fiona is not in her usual witch robe, instead wearing a black cape. I am in my casual outfit of a regular shirt and pants today as well.

"I have finished the important tasks yesterday"

Since we're not going for any quests, the other things we could do are all low priority. In short, it's our proper holiday.

"Let's see, a wand for black magic and armor——That we can do another time, today can be the development day for black magic."

The last time I had spent time devoted purely to working on black magic was in Irz Village. During the counterattack preparation in Alsace Village, I asked Mossan to teach me about model magic related to the darkness attribute, and because of that I had been able to strengthen 『Shadow

Gate』 and 『Anchor Hand』 . Back then I was at my wits' end to improve it, however. The situation right now has become completely different.

“I also want to test out my divine protection power”

The power of changing the nature to flames is something that I cannot take out or ignore from the development process. The offensive abilities of my black magical power until now had been to materialize, enchant, or direct the firing of 『Pile Bunker』 , or use it as the source of my energy when using martial skills.

Though a variation of black magical power and not true fire, this new 『Fire』 attribute this creates the ability to use ‘heat’ and ‘explosion’, two new types of offensive power, on top of my black magic.

This is a major improvement. If it goes well, I might be able to recreate a rocket launcher or flamethrower. No, not might- I will make them. Even the fireball I make at a whim contains considerable explosive power. If I understand the power of this divine protection more, and create a more efficient magic sequence, it will certainly become an ability with great power for fights.

Come to think of it, Mia did say that after using the power from divine protection, I would get the gist of the future powers I would receive from trials. Then this probably means the divine protection is the power to gain magical power in attributes other than what I have now.

Wrath-Pun was a monster specializing in fire. In the case for another monster from a trial, if the monster specializes in water I would get the water attribute, lightning attribute for a monster specializing in lightning, and so forth, so I will be able to use other attributes with my black magic, or so I predict.

After completing all the trials, maybe I will be able to use every attribute magic and become a true Element Master. No, thinking of the origin of the attributes, they are pseudo-attributes, so maybe I would become “The Fake Element Master”.

“In other words, today is a holiday, right?”

“Ah, Yeah, there’s nothing urgent we need to do.”

I did think of a few things we could do, but in the end nothing was urgent.

“How about Fiona?”

“I don’t have anything to do, unlike Kurono-san”

A reply filled with boldness and no-shame came flying at me. Fiona hadn’t go out because of Lily. Her talking partner, Lily, is sleeping today. No wonder she is bored. It’s a good opportunity, how about I take her out to do some shopping, the moment I thought that, a flash flickered in my mind.

“That’s right Fiona, how about I give my gratitude to you?”

“Gratitude?”

Of course, it’s for letting 『Absolute Grudge Hatchet 「Kubidan」 』 evolve. In fact, rather than gratitude, I just want to pay Fiona in any way I can because she sacrificed her body.

“Let me treat you to food for today”

Though I said today, if her stomach got big, I will have to be prepared for it to become the “Spada Gourmet Tour” again. No, it will be fine, we also have the reward from Doltos capture quest, at worst the whole reward will go poof.....just that.....

“You don’t have to be that considerate”

I was convinced she would come biting my wallet, but contrary to my belief, her reaction wasn’t so fine. Fumu, so this is called reading too much into things.

“I see, so it was unnecessary at——”

“No, let’s go eat together”

Ah, so in the end you’re going. To Fiona’s frank attitude, I revealed a smile, though some bitterness might be mixed inside.

“You’re right, I’m sorry for Lily, but let’s go”

As I apologize to Lily in my heart, I realize that it’s going to be the first time Fiona and I go out alone. (editor note: daaaate)

“Just the two of us.....it’s the first time I will get out with Kurono-san, alone.”

Apparently, Fiona had the same thoughts I did.

“For the time being——Let’s meet up in the plaza during noon”

Of course, in front of that large obelisk with the exaggerated name 『Zero Chronicle』 , Lily waited there before as well.

“Wouldn’t it be good if we left the inn together?”

“No, I remembered I have some unfinished work and want to finish that first”

“I see”, Fiona responded. Well, it’s not like I lied. Just like I gave the White Punpun Robe to Lily, I want to give a gift to Fiona too, so emergency business did come up. The only problem is if I can prepare the right gift by noon.

Well then, what shall I give to her.....

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